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# Community Planning after the Community Empowerment Act: The Second Survey of Community Planning Officials in Scotland

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## **Survey Report**

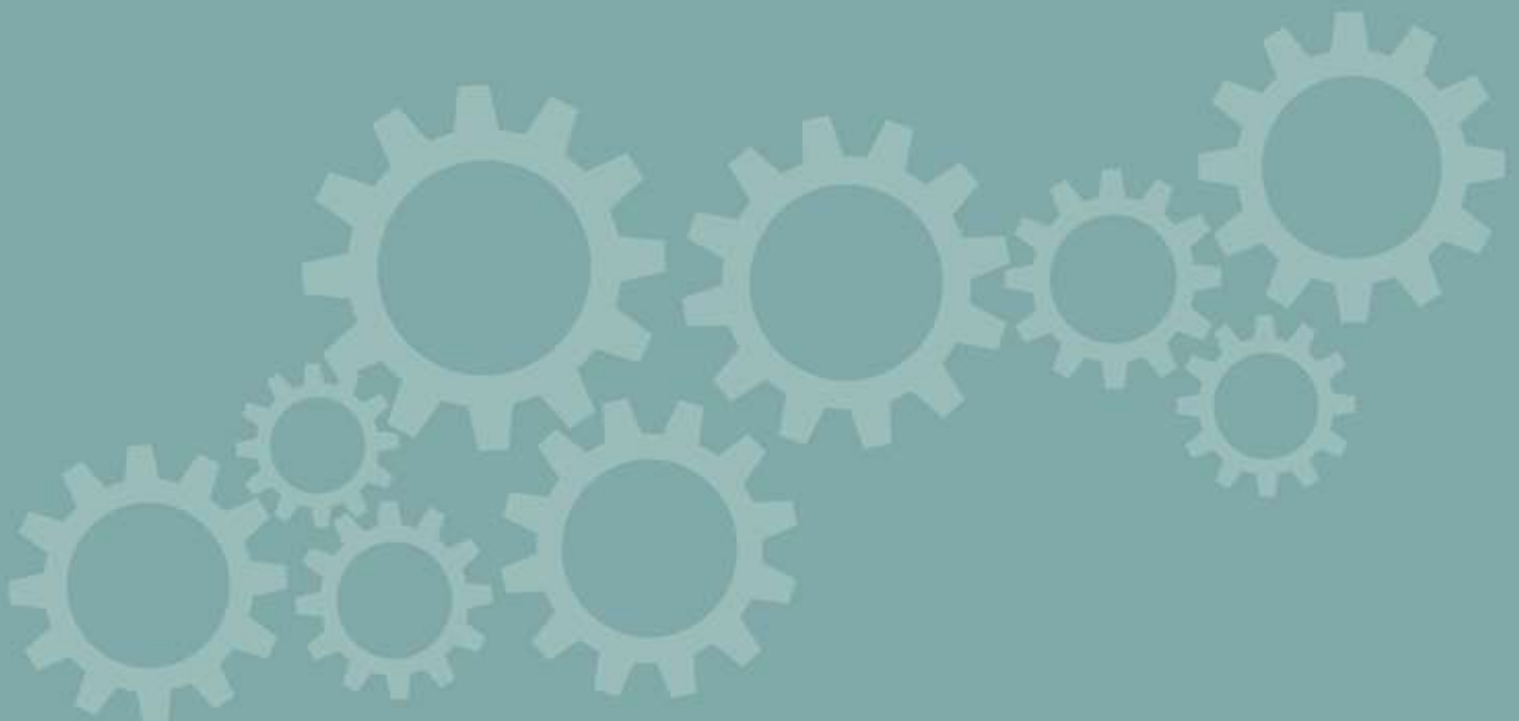
November 2018

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# **Community Planning after the Community Empowerment Act: The Second Survey of Community Planning Officials in Scotland**

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**Sarah Weakley and Oliver Escobar**



**What Works Scotland** aims to improve the way local areas in Scotland use evidence to make decisions about public service development and reform.

We are working with Community Planning Partnerships involved in the design and delivery of public services to:

- learn what is and what isn't working in their local area
- encourage collaborative learning with a range of local authority, business, public sector and community partners
- better understand what effective policy interventions and effective services look like
- promote the use of evidence in planning and service delivery
- help organisations get the skills and knowledge they need to use and interpret evidence
- create case studies for wider sharing and sustainability.

A further nine areas are working with us to enhance learning, comparison and sharing. We will also link with international partners to effectively compare how public services are delivered here in Scotland and elsewhere. During the programme, we will scale up and share more widely with all local authority areas across Scotland.

What Works Scotland brings together the Universities of Glasgow and Edinburgh, other academics across Scotland, with partners from a range of local authorities and:

- Glasgow Centre for Population Health
- Improvement Service
- Inspiring Scotland
- IRISS (Institution for Research and Innovation in Social Services)
- NHS Education for Scotland
- NHS Health Scotland
- NHS Health Improvement for Scotland
- Scottish Community Development Centre
- SCVO (Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations)

This is one of a series of papers published by What Works Scotland to share evidence, learning and ideas about public service reform. This paper relates to the What Works Scotland Governance and Community Engagement workstreams.

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## Executive summary & recommendations

Community planning officials (CPOs) constitute a key group of local public servants in Scotland. They work across a broad range of policy areas, from the environment to regeneration, equalities, housing, planning, transport, community development, and health and social care, to name a few. They are at the forefront of advancing the agenda laid out by the 2011 Christie Commission on the Future Delivery of Public Services and the 2014 COSLA Commission on Strengthening Local Democracy, as well as legislation such as the 2015 Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act.

In sum, CPOs carry out the everyday work of enabling local governance in Scotland at the interface of three crucial policy agendas: public service reform, social justice and community empowerment.

This report presents the comparative findings of the first two surveys (2016 and 2018) of CPOs conducted in Scotland. The timing of these two surveys is significant because it covers the first two years of implementation of the Community Empowerment Act (CEA), and the 2018 survey is one of the first pieces of research to capture some of the early impacts of this legislation on community planning practice. Here, we summarise some of our key findings related to the CEA, community engagement, partnership work and evidence mobilisation, with particular attention to how the two surveys together create a fuller picture of CPOs as frontline policy workers. Based on these results we then provide recommendations for government, community planning partnerships (CPPs), and support and evaluation agencies.

### **The Community Empowerment Act and community engagement in CPPs**

The research found that the most prominent types of community engagement carried out in CPPs rarely entail devolving substantial power and resources to communities. Supporting community empowerment is one of the primary aims of the CEA, and community engagement activities are viewed by 2018 CPOs as a vital aspect of their work; an improvement from the 2016 survey. However, despite their valuing of community engagement and their belief it is something they should put a lot of energy into, there is less evidence that they are organising activities that are co-produced or community-led. Relatedly, CPOs and community members often feel that community participation does not have a marked impact in policy and decision making.

This is linked to a key issue brought up in both surveys – that of inclusion and diversity. From the perspective of CPOs, they worry that community engagement processes tend to repeatedly involve certain groups and individuals rather than a cross-section of the relevant community and can in turn simply replicate the power inequalities at play in communities. For those community members who do engage consistently, this can lead to ‘consultation

fatigue'. Lack of diversity can diminish the usefulness of community engagement evidence for policymakers, and as a result, more community members may become sceptical about the value of participating due to a lack of impact. This creates a vicious circle where lack of diversity and inclusion can undermine the legitimacy of participatory processes, which then hinders their impact. A lack of impact, in turn, makes such processes less appealing to citizens, hence undermining the prospects to improve inclusion and diversity.

Despite these issues, the 2018 survey showed some positive impacts of the CEA in community engagement, particularly in the increase in participatory budgeting activities and the CPOs' positive assessment of local outcome improvement plans (LOIP) as a framework to focus community efforts for change. The survey also reflects a more positive opinion about how some elected members are using community engagement to inform their decisions, and suggests that there is an emerging cohort of more engaged local councillors working with CPOs. This may provide a foundation to improve the democratic credentials of CPPs in terms of bringing together community participation and elected representation.

### **Partnership and deliberative quality in CPPs**

The 2016 and 2018 surveys aimed to investigate key dynamics in CPPs, and in particular how they function as a vehicle to deliver on the public service reform agenda set forth by the Christie Commission. Both surveys found that although partnership working does occur, particularly in the sharing of evidence (see the next section), CPP board meetings are not the main venue where partnership working nor decision-making occurs. The consistent results in both surveys strengthen the argument that CPPs are often seen as 'secondary arenas' for policy and decision making, with core strategic business carried out elsewhere (e.g. through bilateral engagement). Therefore, CPPs function more as spaces for sharing information and planning and coordinating initiatives than as sites for sharing resources, budgets and decision-making.

We also found that deliberative quality remains relatively low at CPP board meetings, where there is limited challenge or disagreement and little opportunity to scrutinise and improve initiatives in partnership. The surveys also reported that CPP partners' influence is less than ideal, with many CPOs feeling that the board is still 'council heavy' and therefore other partners may not be sharing ownership of CPP priorities as intended. This indicates that there is some way to go to meet the objective embodied in the CEA that all partners, not just the council, take more proactive roles in driving the work of CPPs.

### **The role of evidence in community planning work**

CPPs provide a valuable space for partners to share and use evidence, and this has direct impact on the everyday work of CPOs. Indeed, evidence from partners and evidence



generated from public consultation are the two most used sources of evidence reported by CPOs in both surveys. The increase in the use of public consultation evidence is significant in light of the CEA's focus on community input. However, there are various types of evidence gained from consultation and it is important to consider procedural issues when assessing the 'usefulness' and legitimacy of public consultation evidence. Its value greatly depends on the type and quality of processes put in place and whether they meet good standards of inclusion, participation and deliberation.

Other sources of evidence commonly used are from national and local government, while sources from the third sector, academic institutions, and professional bodies are much less frequently used by CPOs. In terms of what evidence is particularly useful and valued, CPOs highlighted evidence from local areas, practical evidence of 'what works', and evidence that helps to evaluate outcomes. The survey also found that CPOs are using evidence to better understand inequalities in their area, particularly when this evidence is appropriate to their spatial scale, but CPOs in both surveys indicated a need for more localised data to improve their work. Finally, the 2018 survey found a new area of interest in evidence use among CPOs; that of 'perception-based data'. This report explores tensions between this type of 'community voice' data alongside higher-level outcomes data in community planning work.

## **Local achievements and challenges**

The 2018 survey illustrates some of the ways that CPPs are making an impact locally, and CPOs report a number of projects that would not happen without the work of the CPP. These include initiatives across a range of policy areas such as community justice, employment, participatory budgeting, and poverty and inequalities. We also found in the 2018 survey that there is far more buy-in to the LOIP compared to the Single Outcome Agreement in the 2016 survey. CPOs report that LOIPs create a shared focus to tackle priorities through collaboration. Respondents from the 2018 survey also have a more positive opinion of senior leadership than in 2016. This improvement is encouraging and may be the result of the CEA driving CPPs' work to create the first round of LOIPs, which provided an avenue where senior leadership could exercise a new vision for community planning in their area of influence. Nonetheless, CPOs identified tensions in reconciling local and national priorities, which was brought up by respondents as an issue challenging the relationships between CPP partners with different lines of accountability –some local and some national. This may impinge on CPPs' autonomy to be responsive institutions of local governance able to act on the basis of local priorities.

## **Understanding CPOs and their work**

The survey shows that the work of CPOs is highly influenced by the Christie Commission, the National Standards for Community Engagement and the Community Empowerment Act. The

National Performance Framework is currently far less influential in their work. The results of both surveys provide a better understanding of this community of policy workers in Scotland; a group who serve as boundary-spanners and strive to challenge some of the rigidities of traditional local governance work. We found that CPOs would like to be able to put more energy into encouraging culture change, using evidence to support policies and practices, and involving communities in policy and decision making.

Despite the challenges outlined in this executive summary and throughout the report, job satisfaction among this group of policy workers is high. This may be due to a relatively strong sense of commitment to making a difference, where CPOs see themselves as internal activists driving culture change in the system and on the ground. To do this work, engagement skills are seen as particularly important by CPOs. The two surveys identified particular skills gaps that could be improved by capacity building and training in engagement (e.g. mediation, facilitation), research, and resource management. Together, both surveys offer a nuanced picture of this dynamic cadre of professionals who act as boundary spanners, deliberative practitioners, public engagers and knowledge brokers. To move this work forward and to fulfil the potential of CPPs as effective platforms for participatory and collaborative governance, we recommend improvements to be led by government, CPPs and support and evaluation agencies.

## **Recommendations**

### **For government:**

1. There needs to be improved public communication, from national and local government, to promote what CPPs do and how people can get involved.
2. The Scottish Government must clarify to what extent CPPs are autonomous spaces where communities and CP partners can focus on local priorities, even though they may vary from national priorities. The current Local Governance Review provides space to address this issue.
3. The Scottish Government should provide funding for the national Community Planning Network to create more opportunities for peer learning and professional development amongst CPOs across the country.

### **For CPPs:**

1. Community participation and representation should be improved at all levels of CPPs, from local partnerships and forums to strategic groups and boards.
2. CPPs must improve transparency about how community engagement influences services, policies and decisions.

3. CP partners should pull together a shared community engagement fund to support lowering current barriers to participation<sup>1</sup>. Alongside traditional engagement, CPPs should develop capacity to organise more inclusive processes that involve citizens seldom heard and reflect a cross-section of the relevant community<sup>2</sup>.
4. CPPs should regularly monitor and address training and skills gaps in the CPOs workforce as well as CP partners tasked with facilitating CP processes. Areas that require particular attention are: research skills; engagement skills, including facilitation, mediation and conflict resolution; and resource management skills.
5. CPPs should develop a framework to improve the sharing and using of evidence between CP partners in order to make the most of existing capacity across organisations and sectors.
6. CPPs should provide spaces for community interpretation of local needs and aspirations on the basis of a range of sources of evidence. Community engagement processes must become more deliberative by building into any participatory process opportunities to engage with various sources of evidence about the geographic or policy area in question.

**For support and evaluation agencies:**

1. The evaluation of LOIPs and Locality Plans must assess to what extent community priorities are shaping the strategic priorities of a CPP. Evaluations must pay particular attention to inequalities in power and influence amongst and within communities.
2. Evaluations should examine the extent to which CPPs constitute effective 'deliberative systems' where different meetings and forums, from the local to the strategic, are coherently linked and feature high quality deliberation and effective action throughout.
3. Awareness of when and how to use Participation Requests must be improved. In particular, there is a role for organisations and networks that work with disenfranchised and disadvantaged groups to promote and support the use of Participation Requests.
4. The added value of CPPs needs to be better understood and communicated within CPPs, across local government and communities, and at national level – for example, by reporting more systematically the collaborative advantages gained through partnership work, as well as specific outcomes for communities of place, practice and interest.

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<sup>1</sup> See Lightbody et al. (2017) 'Hard to reach' or 'easy to ignore'? Promoting equality in community engagement: <http://whatworksscotland.ac.uk/publications/hard-to-reach-or-easy-to-ignore-promoting-equality-in-community-engagement-evidence-review/>

<sup>2</sup> There is a growing field of democratic innovations (e.g. digital crowdsourcing, mini-publics, participatory budgeting) from which to take inspiration. See for example <https://participedia.xyz>

## Section I: Introduction: CPOs in the context of the Community Empowerment Act

Community planning officials constitute a key group of local public servants in Scotland. They work across a broad range of key policy areas, from the environment, to regeneration, equalities, housing, planning, transport, community development, and health and social care, to name a few. They are at the forefront of advancing the agenda laid out by the 2011 Christie Commission on the Future Delivery of Public Services and the 2014 COSLA Commission on Strengthening Local Democracy, as well as legislation such as the 2015 Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act.

In sum, they carry out the everyday work of enabling local governance in Scotland at the interface of three crucial policy agendas: public service reform, social justice and community empowerment.

Yet, despite their crucial role in local governance, we know surprisingly little about this community of practice. This report presents the comparative findings of the first two surveys (2016 and 2018) of community planning workers conducted in Scotland. Its purpose is to reflect their perspectives on topics including:

- The role of community planning officials (henceforth CPOs)
- Key dynamics in community planning partnerships (henceforth CPPs)
- The use of evidence in community planning (henceforth CP)
- Community engagement in CP
- Policies, frameworks and reforms shaping CP
- CP after the Community Empowerment Act.

Participatory and collaborative governance has become a global field of research and practice and entails the combination of multi-stakeholder collaboration and public participation. In Scotland, this is articulated through community planning (CP) policy, which mandates local authorities to develop partnerships where various sectors and organisations engage in collaborative policymaking and service design and delivery. Central to this agenda is the involvement of citizens and communities through an increasing number of participatory processes (Scottish Government, 2016; Audit Scotland, 2013, 2014).

Over the last two decades, moulded through a series of pilots, reforms, policy frameworks and evaluations (Campbell, 2015), CP has become integral to how Scottish governments of various political stripes have envisioned the future of local governance and public service reform (Audit Scotland, 2013; Carley, 2006). Structures have evolved, but the basic blueprint remains. There are 32 community planning partnerships (CPPs), one per local authority area. Although they vary, each CPP has a board and various thematic and executive groups, which typically bring together representatives from local government, health and social care, third sector, police, education and community organisations; some of whom are

mandated to participate by the Scottish Government and some who are encouraged to do so. In addition, there is local community planning, usually organised through neighbourhood partnerships or local area partnerships and various satellite public forums which work closer to communities of place and interest.

In this context, CP policy has generated a new group of officials in charge of facilitating partnership activity and community engagement processes (Escobar, 2017a). These are the community planning officials (CPOs) surveyed in this report. They can be seen as a new breed of policy worker in Scotland, insofar as they combine various new roles mapped in the public administration literature, including:

- boundary-spanners (Williams, 2012) – practitioners who foster collaboration by working across, and seeking to transcend, various organisational and policy boundaries
- deliberative practitioners (Forester, 1999) and public engagers (Escobar, 2017a, 2015b) – practitioners who work to involve communities of place, practice and interest in deliberation as part of policymaking and/or governance processes
- knowledge brokers (Ward et al., 2009) – practitioners who connect various sorts of evidence to policy and practice.

The second survey undertaken in 2018 can be read alongside the baseline survey of CPOs in 2016, and illustrates how aspects of community planning have changed from 2016 to 2018 from the point of view of those doing the work (for the first survey and report see Escobar et al. 2018).

The largest change to the CP context in Scotland from 2016 to 2018 was the implementation of the Community Empowerment Act (CEA, 2015). The Act places emphasis on empowering people at local level, with a particular focus on tackling inequalities and socio-economic disadvantage. As put in a useful brief by the Scottish Community Development Centre (2015, p.2), three major elements of the Act are:

- the strengthening of community planning to give communities more of a say in how public services are to be planned and provided
- new rights enabling communities to identify needs and issues and request action to be taken on these
- the extension of the community right to buy or otherwise have greater control over assets.

Section 2 of the Act is dedicated to CP and expands the legal basis for CPPs and the duties placed on public sector organisations to collaborate and share resources for action. Another expectation is that CPPs must improve community participation and representation – from the local to the strategic levels – in order to improve outcomes for people and places. This must now be articulated through Local Outcome Improvement Plans (LOIPs), which set out the policy priorities and plan of action for each CPP. In addition, there are also Locality Plans

that focus on smaller geographic areas that experience severe disadvantage. Other important measures in the Act are the introduction of Participation Requests, a new mechanism for community groups to be involved in decision-making processes, and the provision in Section 10, which gives ministers the power to open up policy and decision making processes to community participation if public sector organisations do not do that themselves. The Act thus emphasises strengthening CPPs as spaces for both collaborative governance (via partnership across public and third sectors) and participatory governance (via community participation). The 2018 wave of the CPOs survey allows us to gauge how things have evolved since the introduction of the Act.

## Section II: Methodology & the 2018 participants

This is the second survey of community planning officials (CPOs) undertaken by What Works Scotland and is meant to capture the views of as many CPOs as possible (both officers and managers) working in Scotland in 2018. The research design is a repeated census of CPOs in 2018 compared to the census of CPOs in 2016 (therefore a non-probability sample). The questionnaire for this survey was developed from the 2016 survey and the format and topics covered are consistent with those in the first survey. Questions that are the same in both surveys can be compared directly, and this is done wherever possible in figures and tables in this report. Questions that were revised are discussed comparatively in reference to the previous survey's results on similarly-worded questions.

As noted below, while these surveys tried to capture all of the CPOs working in Scotland, this was not entirely possible for a variety of reasons, and we therefore describe both sets of respondents as 'samples'. Again, while we can compare responses between samples, it is important to practice caution when interpreting differences between the two samples because of the changing nature of the CP field and the slightly different recruitment strategy undertaken in 2018<sup>3</sup>.

### Who participated?

The 2018 recruitment strategy garnered 230 CPOs that were approached to complete the online survey. We received responses from 95 participants, which is slightly lower than the 2016 sample (n = 105). Not all respondents completed all of the survey questions and therefore the number of respondents per question is noted in relevant figures and tables for 2018 figures. About 70 participants completed the entire survey, and demographic information is available only for these 70 as the series of personal questions were asked at the end of the survey.

Based on the demographic profile of the 2018 sample, which includes information on education, location and age of respondents, the only notable difference between this sample of 70 CPOs and the 2016 sample is the gender breakdown. In 2018, 26% of the sample were men and 74% were women compared to 39% men and 61% women in 2016. The 2018 sample also shows a slightly older group of CPOs than in 2016.

Table 1 indicates that over half of the respondents were either community planning managers or officers. Over a quarter of respondents responded 'Other' for this question and wrote in their title. Some of these write-ins were recoded, as they were similar to categories provided by the questionnaire. However, two new titles were apparent: 'policy officer' and 'strategy manager'. Both are included in Table 1 (*italicised*) and comprise 14% of the sample.

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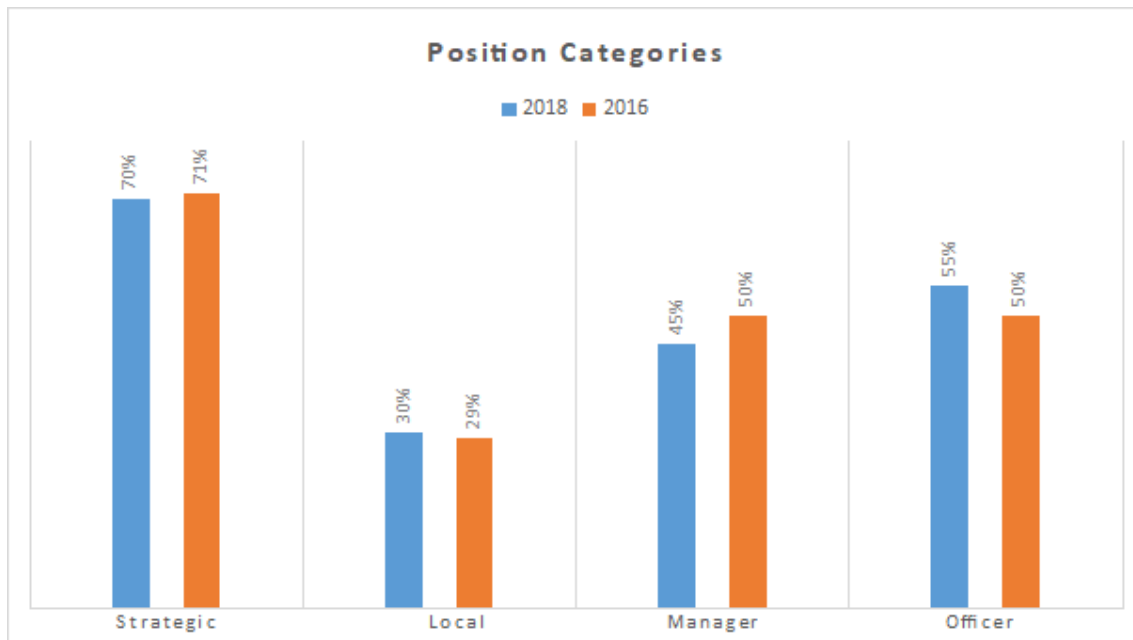
<sup>3</sup> Details on sampling, recruitment and fuller demographic details about the 2018 sample are located in Appendix A.

**Table 1: Current position (n = 95)**

Position	Freq	%
Community planning manager	26	28%
Community planning officer	24	25%
Local CP officer	15	16%
Neighbourhood partnership manager	1	1%
Neighbourhood partnership officer	1	1%
Area partnership manager	7	7%
Area partnership officer	6	6%
<i>Policy officer</i>	5	5%
<i>Strategy manager</i>	9	9%
Total	94	100%

As with the 2016 survey these different positions and respondents are grouped by two binary categories for analytical purposes: the first which details seniority (officer or manager, O/M) and the second delineates the location and level of operation of the CPO (local or strategic, L/S). Local CPOs may be based in local areas or neighbourhoods (e.g. community centres) and operate more often in the context of local CPP forums. Strategic CPOs tend to be based at council headquarters and operate more often at the level of the CPP board and theme groups. The breakdown of respondents in both of these categories are detailed in Figure 1, which is compared with the 2016 sample. In both samples there is a relatively equal split between officers and managers, with a far larger percentage of respondents serving in strategic rather than local roles. But as this is merely a sample of CPOs working in Scotland it is not entirely possible to ascertain if this local/strategic skew is accurate. Nevertheless, because the 2016 sample (n = 103) also had a relatively similar breakdown of respondents in the local and strategic categories, this suggests that this breakdown of both types of position categories may accurately reflect the characteristics of the field (Figure 1).





**Figure 1: Position categories, 2018 and 2016 samples**

As noted in the first report, these categories may have overlap because they are based on the title alone and our understanding of CPPs. For example, a CPO may be based at a strategic level but work primarily with local communities, or a CP officer may have managerial responsibilities. However, because of the useful insights gleaned from these categories in the first survey, and in order to adequately compare the samples, we use these categories again for analysis.

We are also interested in what aspect(s) of the CPP respondents were involved in, detailed in Table 2<sup>4</sup>. There is a similar proportion of respondents in the 2018 survey who participate in each of the CPP structures, particularly the board and theme groups. These group types are used to interrogate further details of CPP roles and actions in Section IV.

**Table 2: Percentage of 2018 sample involved in CPP structures/groups (n = 95)**

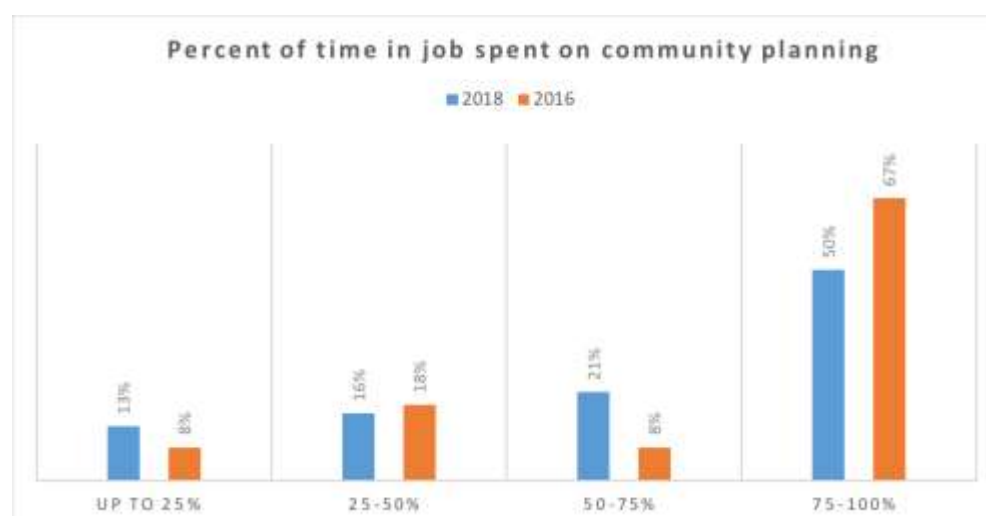
	Freq	% of cases
Board	38	40%
Theme groups	37	39%
Area partnerships	37	39%
Local forums	26	27%
Resource & planning groups	22	23%
Other	14	15%

<sup>4</sup> Respondents could select any and all groups they are involved in, which is why the total percentage is not included in this table as it would exceed 100.

Table 2 shows that respondents operate across the full range of CPP structures and groups, categorised in five types (although labels and composition may vary across the country), including:

1. CPP board, populated by senior representatives from public, third and community sector organisations.
2. Theme groups, which are organised around specific policy and service areas and priorities at the strategic level of the CPP and include representatives from organisations working on related issues.
3. Area partnerships, which cover smaller geographic areas within the CPP and are populated by local representatives from public, third and community sector organisations.
4. Local forums, which are less formal than the groups already referred to and are usually organised around specific issues and timeframes, and are populated by a range of local representatives, groups and residents.
5. Resource and planning groups, which operate at mid-strategic level of the CPP and are usually populated by operational managers from the public and third sectors working on issues related to resourcing, planning and managing various aspects of CPP activity.

The recruitment criteria for this survey specified that we were interested in respondents who work 50% of their time or more in community planning, but the nature of organisational structures means that there are some respondents who do CP work in addition to other roles. The survey asked what percentage of the respondent's time was spent on CP activities, detailed in Figure 2. Half of the 2018 sample spent 75% or more of their time on community planning, a smaller percentage of CPOs in this category than in the 2016 survey. This may reflect the larger proportion of CPOs in 2018 who work in more than one department (see Figure 3).

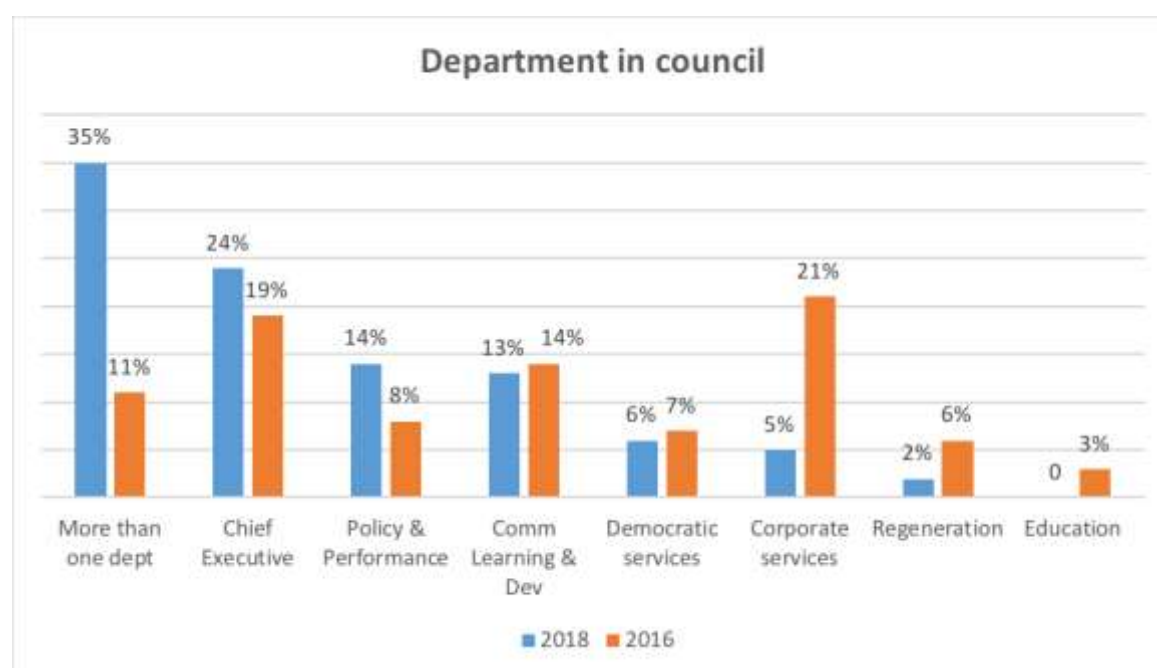


**Figure 2: Percentage of time spent on community planning, 2018 and 2016**

## Section III: Understanding the CPOs workforce

In general CPOs are based within local government, but CP teams differ in where they are located, detailed in Figure 3. The major difference between the 2018 and 2016 sample is the much higher percentage of respondents who work in more than one department, where 35% of the 2018 sample is in multiple departments compared to just 11% in the 2016 sample. This may be reflective of the higher percentage of 2018 respondents who work less than 75% of their time in community planning (Figure 2), but also further reflects the characteristic of community planning as a policy area without an institutional 'home' (see Escobar et al. 2018, p.20).

This resonates with previous research in Scotland (e.g. Escobar, 2014b, Chapter 4) and more broadly in the public administration literature, which notes the predicament of a new generation of policy workers (boundary-spanners, deliberative practitioners, knowledge brokers, etc.) whose cross-cutting roles defy established departmental boundaries and functions (e.g. Williams, 2012; Newman, 2012; Durose et al., 2016). It can be argued that CPOs remain an emerging and evolving community of practice without a clearly anchored institutional space and professional identity (Escobar, 2014b, Chapter 4).

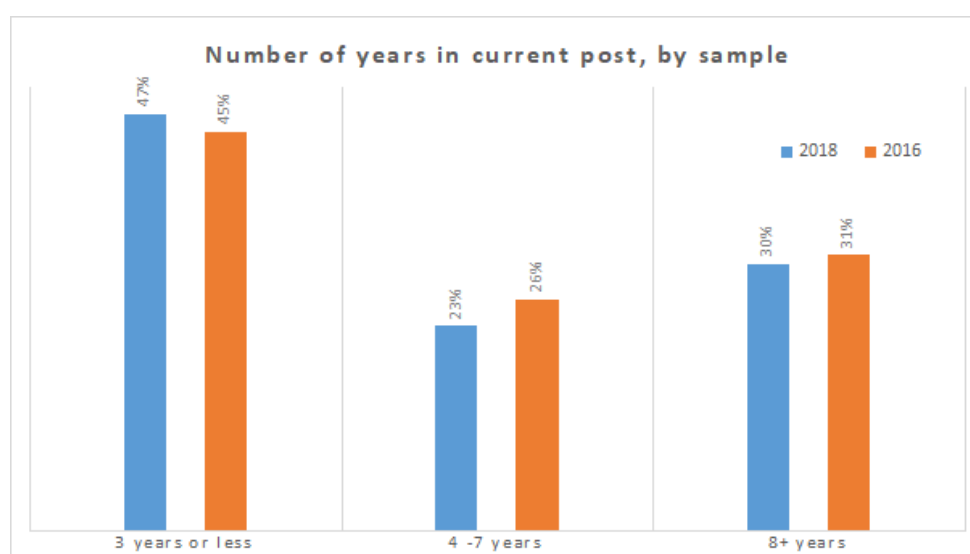


**Figure 3: Department in council where CPO respondent is located, 2018 and 2016**

The majority of 2018 sample members hold permanent positions (89%), which is nearly identical to the proportion of the 2016 sample who are in permanent roles (88%). This data does not determine the number of part time workers or those on temporary contracts who work in CP. This data, along with the 2016 survey, indicates a stable contractual situation for the sample members. Despite having a stable contractual situation, restructuring or

changing job roles could affect a perception of stability in their work, an issue that was mentioned by some respondents in this survey.

Just over half of respondents in 2018 have been in their current position for four years or longer, a breakdown that is similar to that found in the first wave of the survey (Figure 4). This suggests a moderately established cohort of workers whose formation coincides with the aftermath of key milestones in the development of national CP policy (e.g. Concordat, SOAs, CEA). However, almost half of the workforce is relatively new to the job, which relates to issues around skills and training gaps covered later in this report. As with the first wave of the survey, there is no evidence of a significant relationship between a respondent's role as either strategic or local or as an officer or a manager in their job tenure.



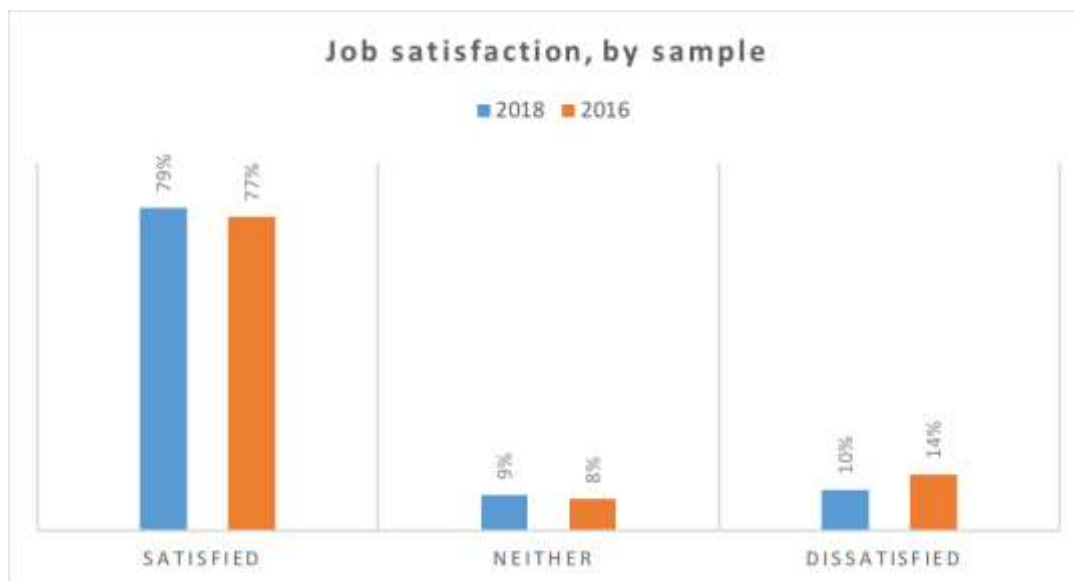
**Figure 4: Number of years in current post, 2018 and 2016 samples**

When asked about their job satisfaction, 79% of sample members in the 2018 sample said they are satisfied in their job (n = 85), responding 'fairly satisfied' or more positively, and 10% of respondents are in the dissatisfied categories. As noted in Figure 5, there is very similar distribution along the job satisfaction scale for the 2018 and 2016 samples, which supports the idea that this distribution of job satisfaction responses is an accurate representation of the field. Indeed, there is no significant difference<sup>5</sup> in the percentage of respondents who are in the dissatisfied categories in both samples. In general, we can conclude that the majority of CPOs in Scotland are satisfied in their jobs despite the many challenges they face, as reflected later in this report. In the 2018 sample, we did not find a significant relationship between the role of the respondent in a local or strategic position

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<sup>5</sup> The significance test undertaken here is a chi square test of equality of proportions, which is the significance test used in the majority of this report when responses of the two samples are compared.

and job satisfaction, nor was there a significant relationship in officer or manager status and job satisfaction.



**Figure 5: Job satisfaction, 2018 and 2016 sample**

The 2018 survey also asked respondents who selected any of the 'dissatisfied' categories to elaborate on the reasons for their choice, a new addition to the survey. While there are varied reasons for an individual's job satisfaction, three issues in particular were mentioned by multiple respondents:

- *A feeling that resources are not sufficient to engage adequately with communities:* One respondent outlined this issue in detail, noting that, "budgetary issues across local authorities are impacting greatly on the ability to deliver and develop at grass roots level. When reducing budgets, mainstay services such as education, social work etc., are untouched. However, with properly invested CP support structures, a range of differences could be achieved especially to support the early intervention and prevention agenda."
- *The challenges of 'frequent restructures',* where the 'whole team is affected by instability/ uncertainty' due to these changes. The restructuring of CP in local government may also be a reason why we see a smaller percentage of respondents in 2018 who work in Corporate Services (Figure 4).
- *Other cultural issues in the work,* in particular a disconnect between the role and purpose of community planning from a CPO's viewpoint and that which is held by the council or other colleagues in non-CP roles in other departments. In particular, one respondent felt their job may be at risk: "I feel that my job could be seen as superfluous to 'business as usual' ... it does feel like an uphill struggle at times and I'm really aware that my job could be vulnerable if funding is cut further and my role isn't seen as justified."

## Key findings

- Results from both surveys provide further evidence that CP work generally does not have an established institutional space in local authorities, with around a third of 2018 respondents working in more than one department. This aligns with the literature identifying CP workers as a unique type of cross-cutting policy worker.
- Job satisfaction among the CPOs surveyed in Scotland in 2016 and 2018 is consistent and positive, even despite some of the challenges identified by CPOs in other parts of the survey. Future qualitative research in particular may be able to illuminate the characteristics and experiences in their work that contribute to this high level of job satisfaction. For the smaller number of respondents who were not satisfied in their job, budget constraints, restructures and larger cultural issues are at play, which is evidenced in other What Works Scotland research with this group of policy workers and beyond (Bynner 2016; Harkins and Escobar, 2015; Henderson and Bland, 2016; Henderson and Bynner, 2018; Lightbody et al., 2017; Bynner et al., 2017).

## Section IV: Understanding the work of CPOs

In this section we explore how CPOs see their role, what practices make up their work and how they assess their skills, and what ways they believe community planning goals can or should be achieved.

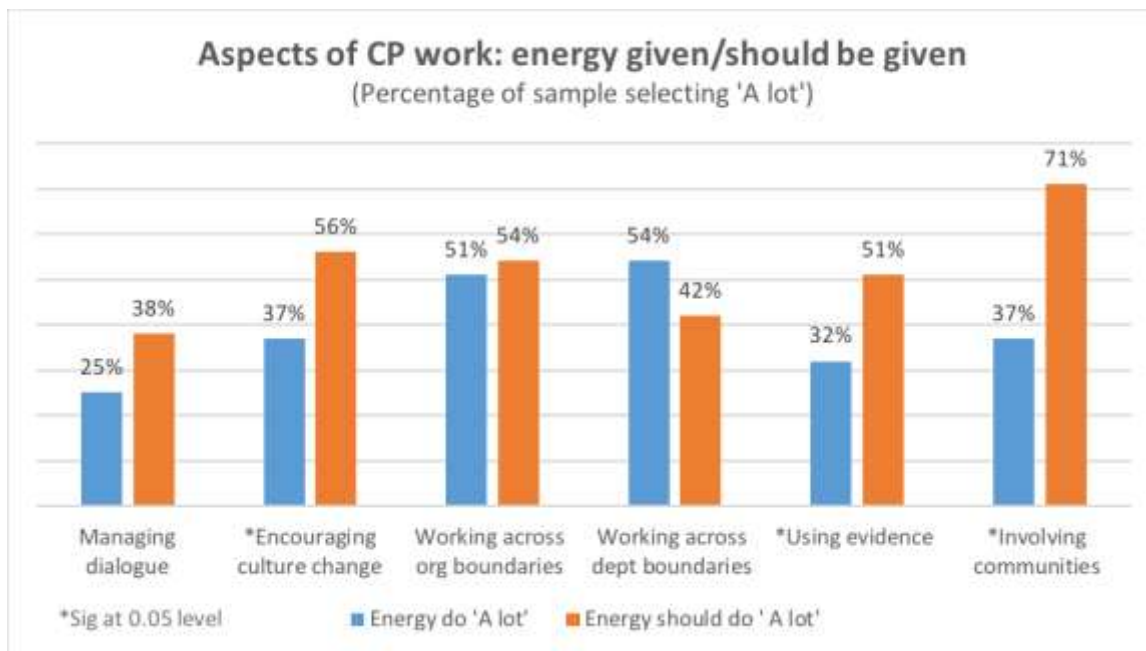
### How CPOs view themselves and their work

The survey investigated to what extent CPOs' roles can be understood with reference to new profiles of policy worker from the public administration literature, as noted earlier:

- Boundary-spanners (Williams, 2012) – practitioners who foster collaboration by working across, and seeking to transcend, organisational and policy boundaries
- Deliberative practitioners (Forester, 1999) and public engagers (Escobar, 2017a, 2015b) – people who work to involve communities of place, practice and interest in dialogue and deliberation as part of policymaking and/or governance processes
- Knowledge brokers (Ward et al., 2009) – people who work to connect various sorts of evidence to policy and practice.

The six aspects of CP work noted in Figure 6 include those aligned with each of the three types of policy worker. To detail which of these aspects of CP work are deemed valuable to CPOs, and to understand if those areas of work deemed valuable are prioritised in their daily work, respondents were asked to detail how much energy they believe should be put into each activity and how much effort they do put into each aspect of their work. This captures to what extent respondents feel their efforts are aligned with their priorities. The value of this series of questions is that it illuminates if there are any aspects of their work that CPOs believe they should be spending more of their efforts on but are currently not doing so.

There are three aspects of CP work where there is a statistically significant difference in the energy that respondents think should be placed on that aspect of work and the energy actually spent on that activity in practice: encouraging culture change; using evidence to support policies and practices; and involving communities in policy and decision making (Figure 6). In each of these three aspects of work, there is a larger percentage of those who believe they should be working on this aspect 'a lot' compared to the energy they believe they are giving to this activity.



**Figure 6: Percentage of respondents responding 'A lot': comparing how much energy they believe is given and should be given to key aspects of CP work (n = 83 -86)**

The largest variation between how much energy a CPO spends on an activity and the energy they believe should be given to that activity is in involving communities in policy and decision making. Some 71% of respondents believe that a lot of energy should be spent on involving communities, but only 37% say that a lot of their energy goes into actually doing this regularly. This, along with using evidence and encouraging culture change, were also aspects of work identified in the first survey as areas where CPOs believe more of their efforts should be spent compared to what is currently being done with similar gaps in responses, suggesting that these areas in particular remain issues for the CP workforce.

There is one aspect of the work where respondents believe they are putting more effort into the work than they believe is necessary, working across departments in their organisation. Although this was not statistically significant, it does perhaps support findings from elsewhere of frustration resulting from lack of buy-in into CP by some local government departments, which in turn results in CPOs having to persuade their council colleagues about the value of partnership working via CPPs (see for example Escobar 2017).

Priorities for CP work were also identified by CPOs in an open response question. When respondents were asked what they believe were the top three ways to achieve community planning goals a few common themes emerged, some which echoed aspects of work noted in Figure 6 and some new aspects. These include:

- Genuine partnership working amongst CP partners, where community planning is viewed as a 'shared enterprise' that affects all partners



- Getting and improving ‘buy-in’ to community planning both from partners on the board and council and at chief executive level
- Local community involvement, by ensuring that ‘local communit[ies] have ownership of the plan, control the agenda and sit at the table at all CPP meetings’
- ‘Shared understanding of what we do and why, based on robust evidence’, which can then allow all those involved in the work to share the value of CP with community members.

## Culture change work

Since the mid-1990s, CP has been seen by successive governments as a key vehicle for public service reform in Scotland and, in particular, to transition towards more open, collaborative and participative forms of local governance (Cowell, 2004; Carley, 2006; Audit Scotland, 2013). A particularly challenging aspect of the role of CPOs is their leadership at the frontline of this culture change effort (Escobar, 2017a, pp. 147-153). CPOs are thus not only public stewards of partnership work and community engagement, but also culture change agents operating at the cutting edge of reforms in governance and public service. As Figure 6 shows (effort put/effort should), our survey respondents showed a strong consensus on the importance of fostering culture change in order to accomplish CP goals – an aspect of work brought up by respondents themselves in the open responses.

Specificity on what constitutes ‘culture change’ however, is valuable to garner from this group of respondents. What do CPOs wish to change about their environment? Multiple respondents in the open-ended question above identified culture change as a way to achieve CP goals, with respondents detailing the need for reducing bureaucracy, overcoming a feeling of apathy by communities in particular, and ‘disrupting the silo-service culture’. One respondent detailed that culture change is a move ‘away from a risk-averse culture’, and ‘to be more willing to hand over power to communities and other partners’.

The Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 (CEA) places new duties on public sector partners to change the way they work both with one another and with communities, with an expectation that CPPs will improve community participation and representation to improve outcomes for people and places. Local Outcome Improvement Plans (LOIPs) and Locality Plans are updated tools for this work. However, as is noted in Figure 6 and in subsequent sections of this report), the results suggest that progress is still needed towards the larger project of culture change in community planning work; progress that the Community Empowerment Act aims to address.

## ‘Activists’ in community planning

As with the first survey, the 2018 survey measured the extent to which this sample of CPOs place themselves on the activist-administrator spectrum, but the questions in the surveys

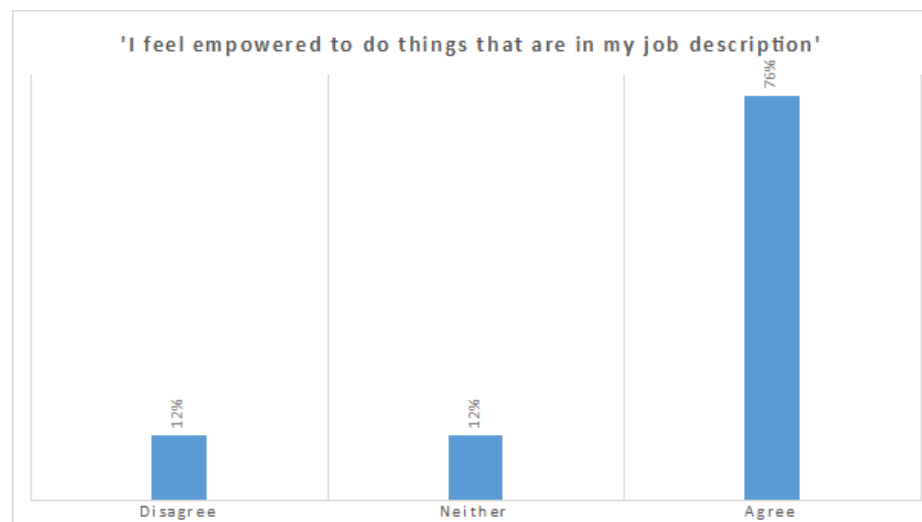
were specified slightly differently. In the course of their everyday work, CPOs work to balance competing demands and interests by fostering collaboration and forging new relationships between the multiplicity of actors and interests at play in local governance (Freeman & Peck, 2007, p. 925). An in-depth study of the everyday practices of CPOs in Scotland analysed approaches to CP work, and argued that there is a spectrum ranging from more 'administrative' to more 'activist' approaches:

*"The administrative CPO adopts a fairly bureaucratic role, working within parameters set by others. The activist CPO develops ongoing political work to reshape policy worlds... The administrative CPO accepts existing cultures, whereas the activist becomes a culture change agent. The former adapts to existing rules-in-use, whereas the latter seeks to create new ones."*

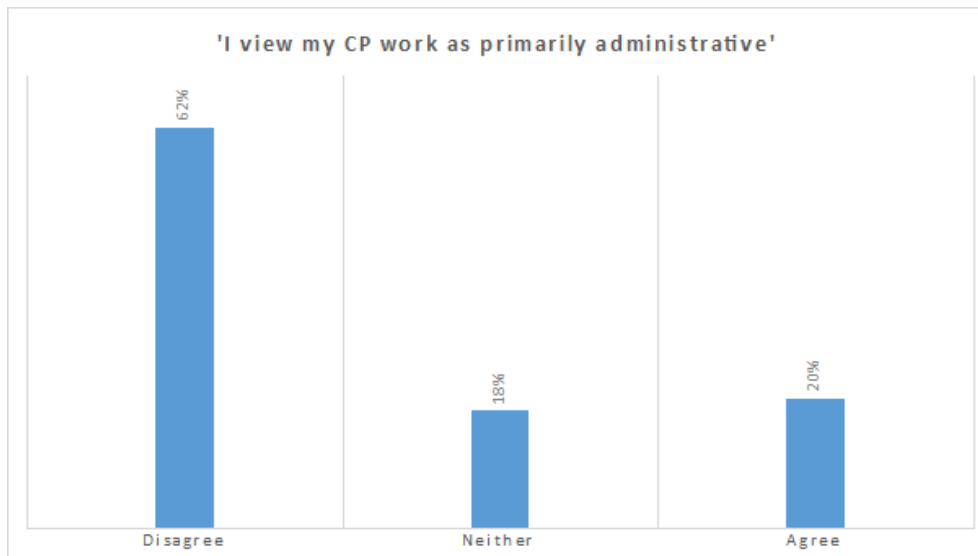
(Escobar, 2017, p. 154; 2014b)

The first CPO survey (Escobar et al., 2018, p. 25) suggested that a majority of CPOs consider themselves to play 'activist' roles in their community planning work, where they may have to 'bend the rules' to get things done. The second survey asked new questions about whether respondents feel empowered to do things both inside and outside their job description, if they consider themselves to be 'activists' explicitly, or if they believe the majority of their work is administrative.

In general, we find that respondents feel empowered to do what is outlined in their job description, with 76% agreeing with the statement 'I feel empowered to do things that are in my job description' (Figure 7). Only 20% of respondents view their role as primarily administrative (Figure 8), which is relatively consistent with the findings of the similarly-worded question in the 2016 survey.

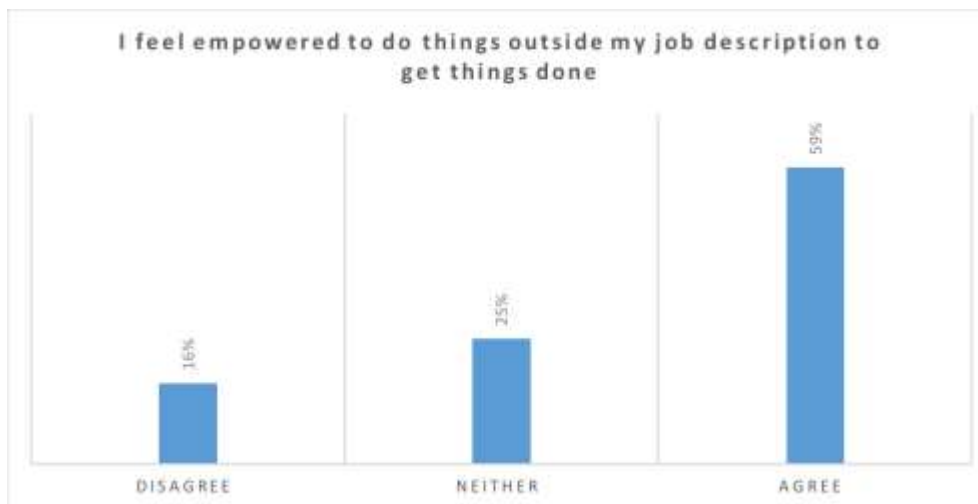


**Figure 7: Agree/Disagree: I feel empowered to do things in job description (n = 83)**

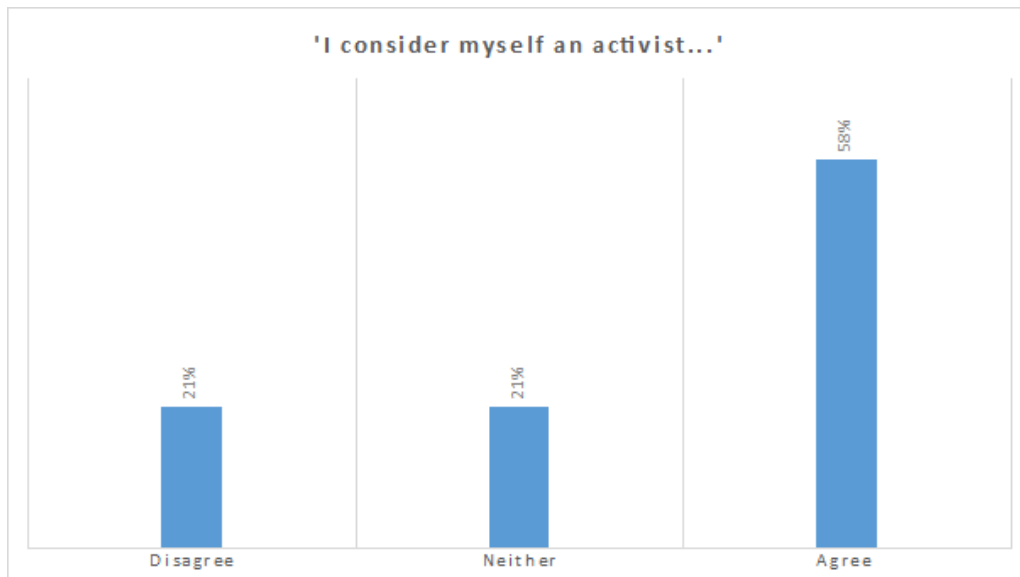


**Figure 8: Agree/Disagree: I view my CP work as primarily administrative (n = 84)**

In this sample of CPOs there is majority of respondents who feel empowered to do things outside of their job description to get things done (59% in 2018, Figure 9) and who take on 'activist' definitions of themselves (58% in 2018, Figure 10). In a similarly worded question in the 2016 survey, we also found that a majority of CPOs take on these types of roles, indicating a cadre of individuals who take on activist approaches in their work.



**Figure 9: Agree/Disagree: 'I feel empowered to do things outside my job description to get things done' (n = 84)**



**Figure 10: Agree/Disagree: 'I consider myself an activist who is trying to make a difference through CP work' (n = 85)**

As argued in Escobar (2014b, pp. 68-72, 236-238), the activism of CPOs doesn't focus necessarily on specific issues but rather on the form that policy processes take to deal with those issues – i.e. collaborative, participative and/or deliberative. CPOs can be considered internal activists who do culture change work from within local government, challenging the 'stereotypical distinctions between activist outsides and incorporated insides' (Newman, 2012, ebook location: 4551). The experience and position of CPOs illustrate that it is 'too simplistic to associate subversion solely with action outside the official sphere' (Barnes & Prior, 2009, p. 10). This has implications for the type of skills needed to drive this kind of culture change work. As Goss (2001, p. 5) puts it:

*'working in the space between bureaucratic, market and network cultures, creates space for innovation ... The constant collision of different assumptions and traditions offers scope to challenge on all sides. The very messiness begins to break down old systems and procedures... New skills and capabilities are needed.'*

## CPO skills and training

The survey explored a range of skills in four categories:

1. Engagement skills (mediation, negotiation, facilitation, consultation)
2. Communication skills (persuasion, presentation, writing)
3. Research skills (research, finding and sharing evidence)
4. Management skills (managing team work, resource management, conflict resolution)

Table 3 groups the skills in these four areas and details the proportion of respondents who assess their skill levels in either of the two high categories or the other three lower categories. We find that a majority of respondents report high skill levels in all of the communication skills listed, and in facilitation and consultation skills. However, the 2018 sample reports lower proportions of respondents who indicate high skill levels in mediation, research, resource management and conflict resolution in particular compared to their skill levels in other areas. In general, the assessment of skill levels by the 2018 respondents are similar to the 2016 sample with the exception of mediation skills, where the 53% of the 2016 reported high skill levels in this area compared to just 34% of the 2018 sample, a statistically significant difference at the 0.10 level ( $p = 0.06$ ). Mediation skills are central to effective partnership working, so it would be of interest to determine what is underlying these changes in the 2018 survey – e.g. is it perhaps related to the fact that almost half of the workforce is relatively new to the job?

**Table 3: What is your level of skill in...? (n = 85 – 83)**

		High to Very High	Med/Low/ Doesn't Apply
<b>Engagement skills</b>	Facilitation	79%	21%
	Consultation & Engagement	75%	25%
	Negotiation	54%	46%
	Mediation	34%	66%
<b>Communication skills</b>	Writing for different audiences	74%	26%
	Persuasion	61%	39%
	Presentation /public speaking	62%	38%
<b>Research skills</b>	Finding & sharing evidence	54%	46%
	Research	46%	54%
<b>Management skills</b>	Managing team work	62%	38%
	Resource management	45%	55%
	Conflict resolution	38%	62%

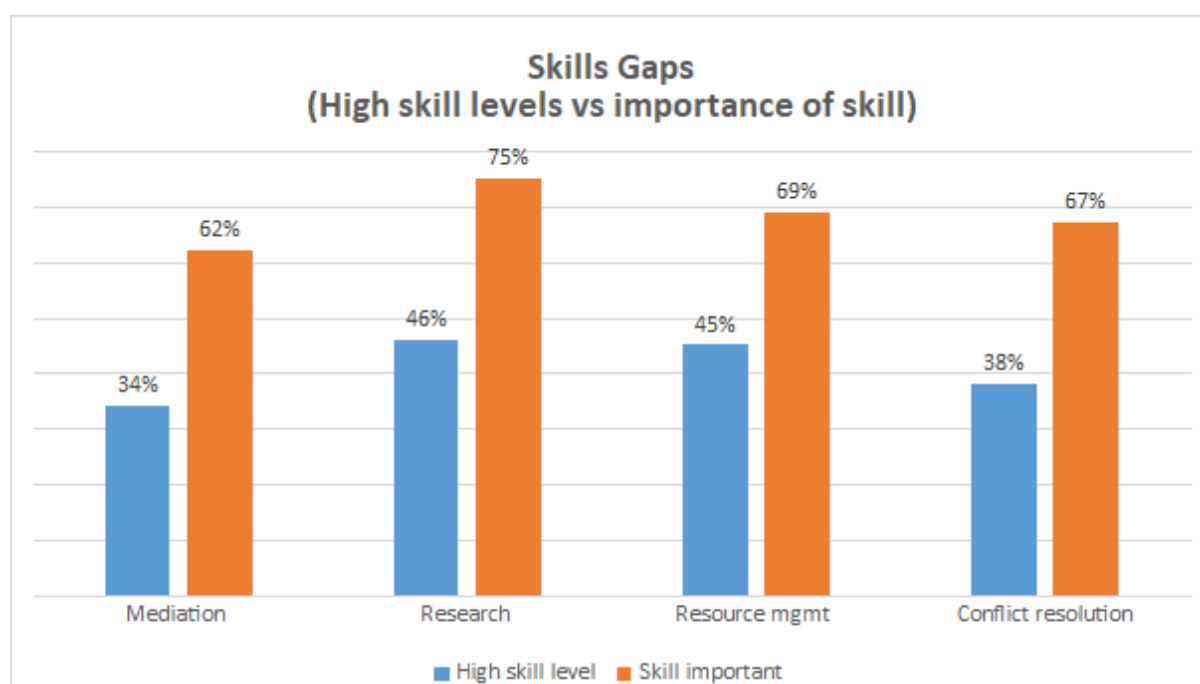
We are also interested in how important the respondents believe these skills are for their work, to highlight if there are gaps between their self-assessed skill levels and how important they consider the skill for their work (Table 4).

**Table 4: How important is this skill for your work? (n = 85 - 83)**

		Important or V. Important	Somewhat/ Not important
Engagement skills	Facilitation	92%	8%
	Consultation & Engagement	92%	8%
	Negotiation	81%	19%
	Mediation	62%	39%
Communication skills	Persuasion	82%	18%
	Presentation /public speaking	81%	19%
	Writing for different audiences	79%	21%
Research skills	Finding & sharing evidence	86%	14%
	Research	75%	25%
Management skills	Resource management	69%	31%
	Managing team work	68%	31%
	Conflict resolution	67%	33%

While in general all the skills listed are considered important or very important by a majority of sample members, engagement skills were considered most important by the highest percentage of CPOs, which is also the area where CPOs say they have the highest skill levels. Viewing both tables in tandem, we can begin to see where there may be gaps in self-assessed skill levels and how CPOs assess the importance of that skill. In particular, we are interested in areas where there is a high percentage of those who believe the skill is important but a lower proportion of respondents who say their skills in that area is high. For four skill areas, the gap between high skill levels and the importance of the skill in CP work is statistically significant (Figure 11): mediation, research, resource management and conflict

resolution. Thus, there is scope for developing training and capacity building in these areas in particular.

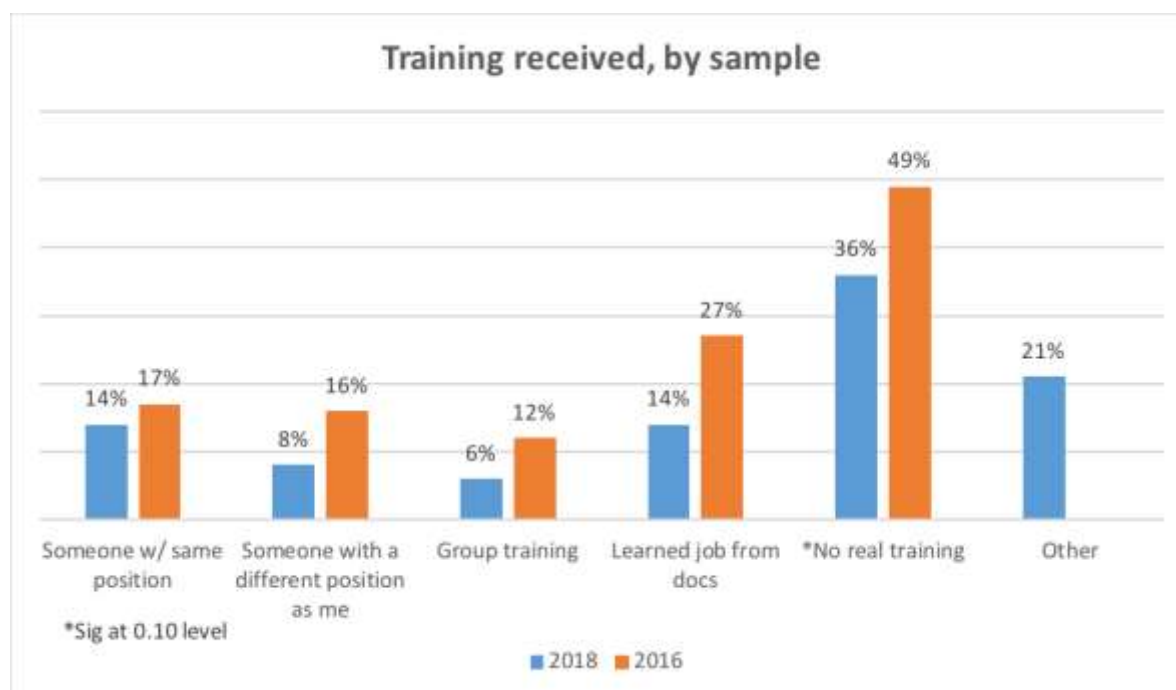


**Figure 11: Identifying a skills gap in four areas, percentage of CPOs reporting high skill levels and high importance of skill (n = 85-83)**

Figure 12 identifies the type of training that respondents completed when starting their current role for both the 2016 and 2018 CPO sample. More than half of the 2018 sample (n = 85) identified that they either had no real training (36%) or that they had another type of training than the options that were listed (21%). A difference between the two samples is the percentage of respondents who selected that they had 'No real training', where in 2018 there was a smaller percentage who selected this response, which is statistically significant at the 0.10 level ( $p = 0.09$ ). However, the 2018 response pattern is influenced by the addition of the 'Other' category, which likely captured some of the respondents who would have otherwise selected 'No real training'. It may also indicate that some CP teams are putting in place training opportunities, perhaps as a result of the momentum and expectations around the Community Empowerment Act.

Of the open responses in 2018 given by those who selected 'Other training', a consistent theme of 'learning on the job' or 'previous work experience' was given as the type of training they received for their current role. This provides further evidence to the conclusion that some of the respondent's work in CP is an extension of their previous work in other public service roles, something that was suggested in the 2016 CPO report. These results also confirm what is reported in literature on new types of policy worker, where community planning entails multi-faceted roles where people learn by doing, through reflective practice

and ongoing development as part of a community of practitioners (Forester, 1999; Williams, 2012; Wenger, 1998).



**Figure 12: What sort of training did you receive when you began your CP role? 2018 and 2016 samples**

Finally, we also asked respondents what sorts of skills they would like to develop further after they assessed their current level of skills and training provision. A few common skill areas were noted by multiple respondents in the 2018 survey, which were also skill areas noted by CPOs in the 2016 survey<sup>6</sup>:

- *Engagement skills:* negotiation, facilitation and persuasion with both other officials and elected members were mentioned most frequently by respondents. As one respondent put it, these types of skills are useful if tailored to CPP work since persuasion and negotiation ‘are the main weapons we have when working with people of higher status than ourselves’. The value of these skills was also noted for work with communities, particularly facilitation.
- *Research methods:* respondents listed a variety of research methods skills, including data generation, statistical analysis, improving outcome-based reporting from research, and presenting data effectively.

<sup>6</sup> Responses to the open-ended question may also be influenced by the series of skill-related questions noted in Tables 3 and 4.



- *Strategic management skills:* skills mentioned in this area include broader skills in ‘project management’, ‘performance management’, and ‘strategic planning’ and more specific areas of strategic financial management and strategic resource management.

Notably, the skill areas detailed by multiple respondents in the open-ended questions were consistent with the areas in which there are identified skills gaps, noted in Figure 11 (i.e. mediation, research, resource management, conflict resolution). Together with the 2016 survey, where similar issues were raised in skill areas both in open and closed questions, it is clear that CPOs are interested in particular in formal training in these areas.

## Key findings

- Involving communities in community planning, using evidence, and encouraging culture change were aspects of work identified by CPOs where they believe more of their efforts should be spent compared to what is currently being done. Consistent results from both of the CPO surveys suggest that these areas in particular are perennial issues for the CP workforce.
- The majority of CPO respondents in both surveys also defined themselves as activists in their work. These are ‘internal activists’ whose activism is more often manifested in the processes facilitated in their daily work, which are collaborative, participatory and deliberative.
- Skills gaps were found for this group of CPOs in four areas: mediation, conflict resolution, research, and resource management. These areas (and more broadly engagement skills) were also noted in open-response questions as skill areas they would like to develop further, and where training and capacity building may be best directed.
- Training among the CPO workforce when they first begin their roles, however, is less formalised than perhaps in other fields of work. Results here suggest that training is done either ‘on the job’ or their work in CP is an extension of their previous roles in government. All four of these key findings corroborate other What Works Scotland research investigating public service workforce engagement and empowerment, and the need to develop a new set of skills required to support the transformation in working practices and cultures (Bynner, 2016; Harkins and Escobar, 2015; Seditas, 2014).

## Section V: Using Evidence

Improving the use of evidence to inform policy and practice is one of the central issues in current public service reform in Scotland (Coutts & Brotchie, 2017). The survey included questions to explore the use of evidence in the context of CPPs and CP work. Many of the questions on evidence in the 2018 were revisions of those used in the 2016 survey, but we can comment on similarly-worded questions on evidence use.

We found that CPOs in this sample use evidence obtained through public consultation most often. The use of evidence from public consultation is particularly encouraging given the value that the CEA places on community engagement activities as a way to influence policy (Figure 13). While the proportion of respondents who use partner evidence often is similar for the 2016 and 2018 surveys, there is a higher percentage of respondents who use public consultation evidence often in 2018, which again may be due to the implementation of the CEA and in particular the development of the new Local Outcome Improvement Plans.

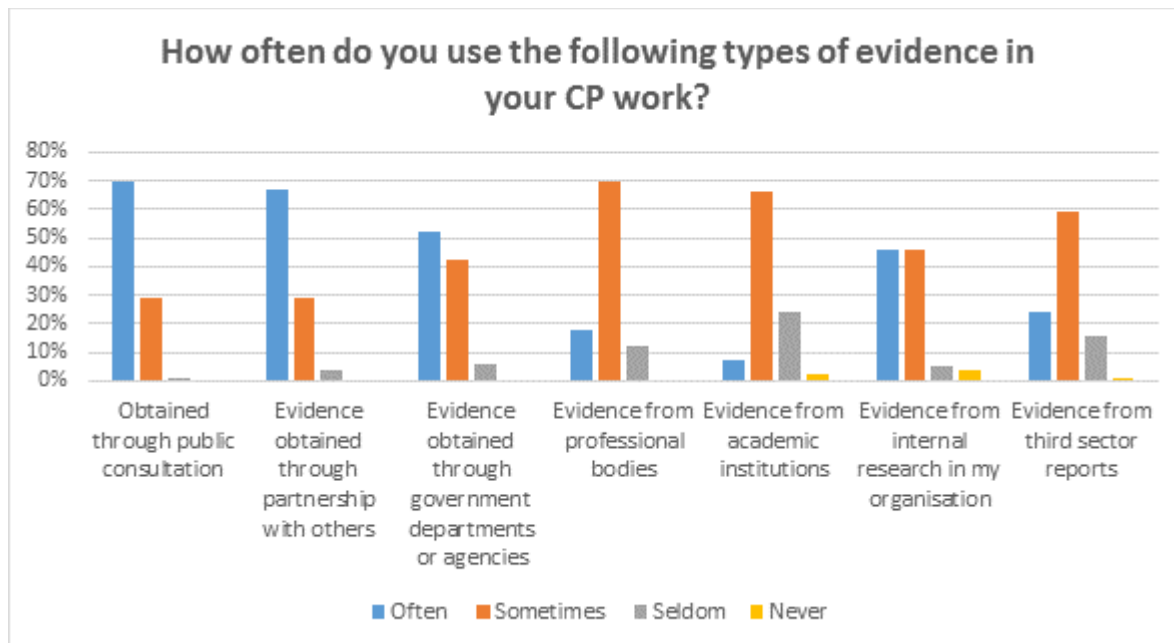
There are various types of evidence gained from public consultation along with the challenges of inclusion and diversity that complicate the use of this type of evidence by policymakers. In Bynner and Terje's (2018) qualitative research on evidence use in one CPP, they also discovered issues with the meaningfulness of public consultations from the perspective of community members depending on the type of consultation (e.g. questionnaires, face-to-face meetings, working groups, tenant scrutiny panels), which can impact how useful this evidence is to both CPOs and communities. When this CPO survey evidence is combined with further qualitative work, we find further nuance to the idea that public consultation evidence is simply 'good' or 'bad' in community planning work. It really depends on the type and quality of processes put in place and whether they meet good standards of inclusion, participation and deliberation. We return to these issues later in the report.

As with the 2016 survey, it is striking how much evidence respondents say comes from partners; here roughly 70% of respondents report partner evidence use (Figure 13). We may read into this that CPPs can be self-referential, with partners relying considerably on each other's evidence. But this can also be interpreted as indicating good CPP collaboration when it comes to sharing evidence – assuming that evidence is being adequately discussed and leads to a robust shared understanding through deliberation. This is an area that merits further research, and we return to related issues later when discussing deliberative quality in CPPs. Bynner and Terje's work also found this type of evidence sharing, with further detail on the importance of trusting relationships with partners for this collaboration to be successful:

*'frontline service providers, professional networks and partner organisations were important sources of evidence although institutional changes and organisational restructuring made it difficult to form stable collaborative relationships with partners.'*

*There was bias within services towards their own data being more trustworthy and relevant than data from other sources’.*

(2018, p. 13)



**Figure 13: How often do you use the following types of evidence? (n = 83)**

Half of respondents also report often using evidence from the government in their work and nearly half use evidence from their own organisation’s research. Evidence from other areas, however, are used far less often: in particular, evidence from the third sector, academic institutions, and from professional bodies are used only ‘sometimes’ or ‘seldom’ (also echoed in Bynner and Terje 2018). In general, then, the primary source of evidence accessed from outside of the CPO’s organisation or in the course of their own partner working is from other government sources.

We are also interested more specifically in how CPOs use data in their work (both qualitative data and quantitative/statistical data). Given the responses in Figure 13, we also find unsurprisingly that over half of the CPOs in 2018 use data produced by partners often, with only 7% seldom engaging with this data (Table 5). In general, then, data produced by partners is a key resource CPOs use in their work. Open responses on data and evidence improvement also indicate that respondents would like even more data sharing and collaboration with partners.

**Table 5: How often do you use data produced by your partners? (n = 84)**

	2018
Often	55%
Sometimes	37%
Seldom	7%
Total	100%

Because evidence and data from CPO partners is used most often, it is important to provide specificity on what kinds of evidence from partners CPOs find most useful. Common themes and responses from an open-ended question on the types of evidence found to be most useful include:

- *Evidence from the local level:* respondents mentioned in particular area profiles, information gathered from community learning and development workers (particularly needs assessments), community surveys, and information on local client groups. Many respondents also noted the value of ‘relevant information and analysis from their own consultations and community engagement exercises’: in particular evidence that ‘captures the community voice’. (We return to this issue of ‘perception-based data’ in the next subsection.)
- *Evidence on CP practices and ‘what works’:* evidence noted along this thematic area includes project evaluations and evidence from similar projects done by partners, evidence on their performance indicators, and ‘practical evidence’ on ‘what works for others’ in CP projects.
- *Data on LOIP indicators and metrics:* respondents here noted that ‘evidence that contributes to reporting on our LOIP, to show how we are progressing toward our key local outcomes’ is particularly valuable, including those on regional LOIP priorities.
- *Strategic evidence:* in this area, some respondents simply stated ‘strategic assessment’ evidence from partners, while some went slightly further, to detail that it would be useful for evidence and data on ‘strategic trends, including projections based on evidence’.

Finally, some respondents specifically mentioned evidence from Police, Fire and Rescue and the NHS or those elsewhere in health and social care would be useful if they could have access to it. However, as noted in the data challenges section, CPOs do understand that this data may not be able to be accessed as readily or openly as some other data types, which may be an area for improvement. Other research has also noted that this type of evidence is best used for CPOs when it is contextualised and translated down to the level of the individual service area (Bynner and Terje 2018).

## Evidence use and different ‘ways of seeing’

One respondent indicated a tension in the usefulness between the type of local and community-produced evidence and statistical data in their everyday work:

“Data that provides trends is most beneficial, however, I recognise that there are limitations to how this data can be used. People-based data provides more depth on qualitative outcomes. A typical example is where we present information to communities suggesting that we have supported X number of people into employment and reduced crime by X percent in the community, only for the community involved to tell us nothing feels different.”

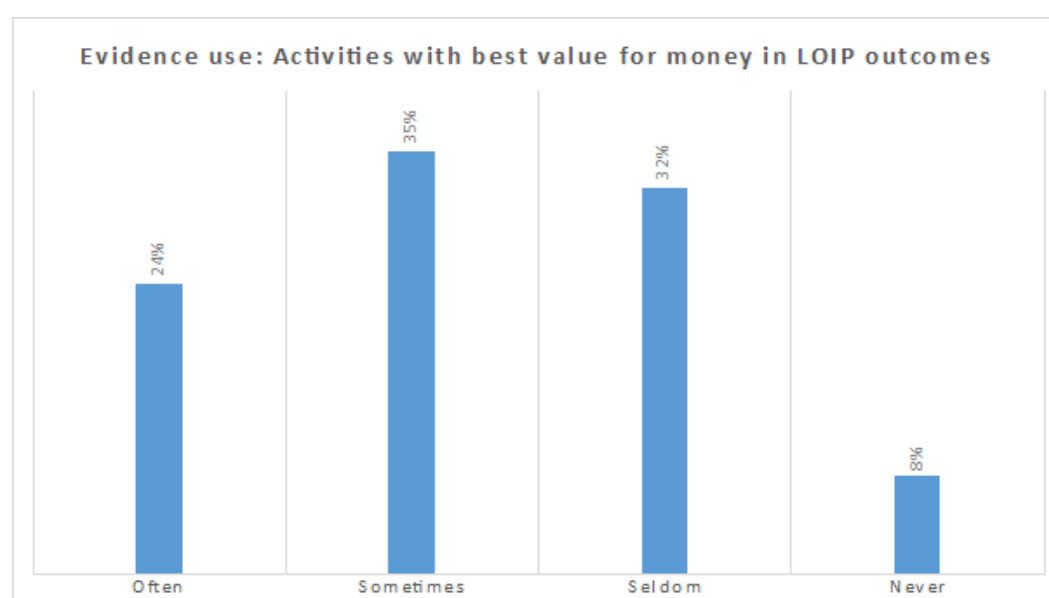
This quote highlights two important issues at work. Firstly, that statistical evidence may be utilised in community planning best when used in conjunction with ‘human stories’ behind the numbers to share the story with community members when there is a difference in the perception of evidence (Bynner and Terje 2018). This type of evidence is welcomed by CPOs (both from the CPOs surveyed here and in Bynner and Terje’s work). Secondly, the quote illustrates the way that evidence is presented to communities matters and is often a ‘tactful’ exercise from CPOs; one that involves interweaving different types of evidence while also being sensitive to the feelings of community members when this evidence is discussed (particularly with evidence that is considered ‘negative’). Both this survey’s research and qualitative research asserts that there is a need to create more opportunities for CPOs and communities to interpret evidence and co-produce knowledge together, which can add nuance to local experiences.

An important focus of the CEA is the role of local governance via CPPs in reducing inequalities. We find that CPOs in the 2018 sample use research very often to understand inequalities (71% of the total sample) (Table 6), which is consistent with a similarly worded question in the 2016 survey. In 2018 there is a higher percentage of CPOs working in strategic roles who say they use this type of research often in their work. Although the difference was not found to be statistically significant, it is notable (although not surprising) that those in local roles use research on inequalities less: as will be noted in the data challenges section. There is far less research available at local levels, so those working in this type of role may interact with data and research on inequalities less. Bynner and Terje’s qualitative work also found a tension at local levels about how to communicate the type of evidence that can be ‘highly emotive’ (2018, p. 1). We can suggest cautiously that the CEA has had an impact in focusing attention on inequalities, and improving local governance through CPPs in LOIPs and Locality Plans may be able to address inequalities.

**Table 6: How often do you use research to understand inequalities in your area? (n = 84)**

	All	Local (n = 24)	Strategic (n = 58)
Often	71%	58%	76%
Sometimes	22%	29%	19%
Seldom	7%	12%	5%
Total	100%	100%	100%

Finally, CPOs were asked how often they use evidence to understand which CP activities offer best ‘value for money’ in achieving LOIP outcomes. As noted in Figure 14, only a small percentage of respondents use this type of ‘best practices’ evidence often, with only a quarter of CPOs responding in this way. The lower percentage of respondents using this type of evidence may reflect that this type of evidence is not available to CPOs (either not produced or not available to CPOs). Again, data on ‘best practices’ is an area brought up in the open responses as one where more evidence would be useful for CPOs, particularly from partners.



**Figure 14: How often do you use research to understand which activities are the best ‘value for money’ in achieving LOIP outcomes? (n = 84)**

When CPOs were asked to expand on which sorts of evidence or research would improve their community planning work more broadly in an open-ended question, some of the same themes were found here as in the open-ended question on useful data:

- *Local data, particularly data made available to local actors that is timely.* This issue of timeliness was brought up by multiple respondents, where one noted that the

lack of timely local data, “makes life really difficult for use in providing our localities with information about inequalities”. This particular challenge was also brought up again in a further open-ended question upcoming, especially referring to data at the national level.

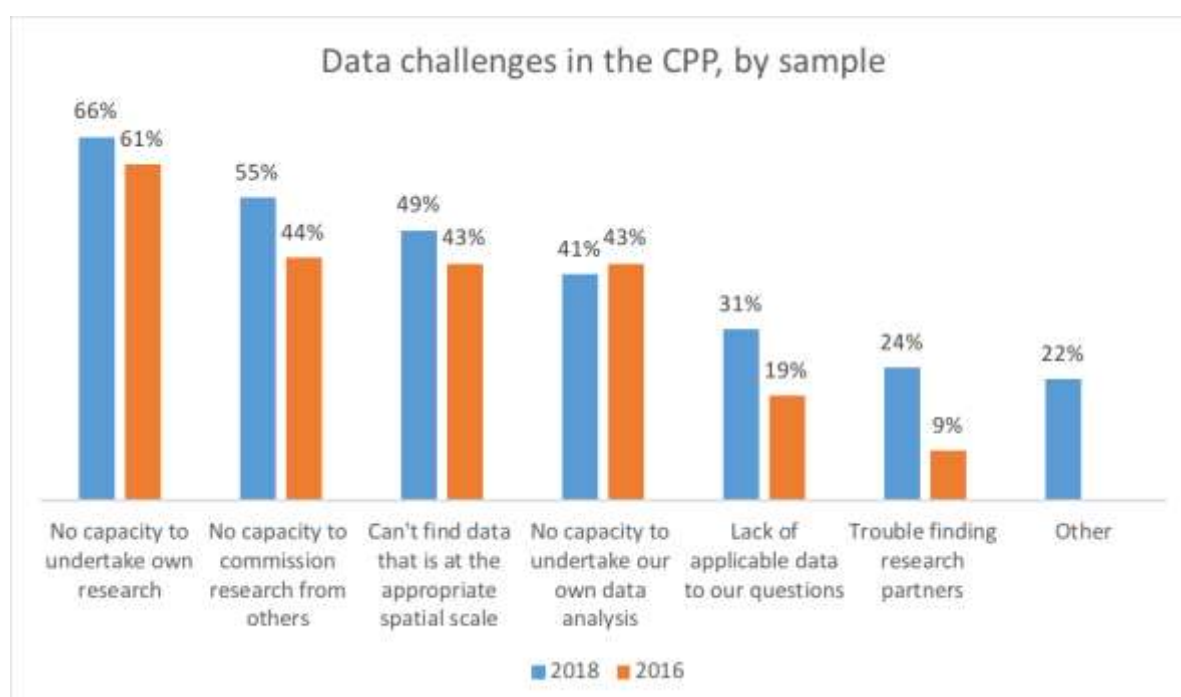
- *More evidence on best practices in community planning (or ‘what works’)*, where a respondent mentioned in particular data on ‘what works and why’ would help to “create change in how services are delivered locally”. Another respondent mentioned in particular “what works particularly around co-production and participation”.
- *Outcomes data*, especially at the community or local level, was mentioned as another type of evidence that could improve work. A respondent mentioned in particular the challenges of accessing research on rural locations, and mentioned that, “SIMD doesn’t reflect what we see and understand regarding rural poverty and hidden deprivation in very rural parts of our area”. Respondents also mentioned evidence would be useful on ‘return on investment’ type of outcomes or outcomes/indicators that can ‘effectively track real progress’.
- *Partners’ ‘operational data’*: respondents noted that evidence from Police, NHS, Health and Social Care which could be more linked up to local authority outcomes, or made more available if possible would improve their work.
- *‘Perception-based data’*, a phrase brought up multiple times in the 2018 sample, which was an issue not detailed in the first survey. This language was used to describe community voices/opinions that are (sometimes) not captured or which may be at odds with how agencies assess whether they are being effective (this idea/disconnect was mentioned specifically). Again, evidence gathered from ‘listening to what communities have to say’, particularly from community members and groups outside of the ‘usual suspects’ (a phrase used by respondents) was brought up by multiple respondents and is echoed in Bynner and Terje’s (2018) qualitative research with a CPP.

## Data challenges

Respondents were also asked to identify whether their CPP had any particular types of challenges in their use of data and evidence; the categories used were generally similar to those given in the 2016 survey (Figure 15). The most common challenges among respondents in 2018 is that they have no capacity to undertake their own research (66%), they have no capacity to commission research from others (55%), or they can’t find data that is at the appropriate spatial scale (49%). Further What Works Scotland qualitative evidence on evidence use in community planning also found these issues to be prevalent (Bynner and Whyte 2016; Bynner and Terje 2018). Public professionals in the CPP investigated by Bynner and Terje mentioned that constraints in staff time and financial

resources restrict how evidence is used and produced in their work, with a key challenge of ‘just getting the time’ to work with data (2018, p. 24).

The proportion of respondents reporting the three most common data challenges are relatively similar in both surveys, but there is a statistically significant difference in the proportions who identify a lack of applicable data and trouble finding research partners. A higher proportion of CPOs in 2018 report these two issues, and likely reflect the common finding from the open responses detailed in the previous pages of a lack of local data; a consistent theme across both the closed and open-ended questions. This may also reflect a greater propensity from these CPOs to use research and consequently find more gaps precisely because they tend to ask more questions.



**Figure 15: Data challenges in the CPP, 2018 and 2016 samples**

We are also interested in whether there is a relationship between the role of the respondent in their CP work and the data and evidence challenges they identify (see Table 7). The only significant relationships were found between the CPO’s role as either local or strategic and their capacity to commission research from others and their capacity to undertake their own data analysis. In each of these challenges there is a higher proportion of local CPOs identifying these issues. This response pattern may be due to less access to funds to commission research at a local level; local CPOs’ lower capacity to undertake data analysis may be due to less access to data analysts within their team and the time required to undertake this work; an issue that is affirmed in qualitative data with the CPOs (Bynner and Whyte, 2016; Bynner and Terje 2018). The challenge of being unable to analyse data



themselves in CP work was also brought up in the open responses regarding skills, and may be an area to focus training and capacity-building efforts.

**Table 7: Challenges in data and evidence use, by CP role (2018)**

	Strategic	Local
No capacity to undertake own research	64%	75%
<b>*No capacity to commission research from others</b>	50%	71%
Can't find data that is at the appropriate spatial scale	53%	37%
<b>**No capacity to undertake our own data analysis</b>	33%	62%
Lack of applicable data to our questions	34%	21%
Trouble finding research partners	21%	33%
Other	22%	21%

\*p < 0.10 \*\* p < 0.05

The final open response question on evidence asked respondents to detail how to improve the use of evidence in their work, specifically: 'What could make the most difference to the use of evidence and research in your CP work?'

- Again, the consistent issue of more localised data was mentioned by multiple respondents as a way to improve evidence and research use, particularly as a way to bring issues to communities more clearly in engagement work.
- Particularly as partner evidence and data is found to be used most often by CPOs (Table 6), improvements in data sharing among partners was mentioned specifically. This includes improvement in 'joint partnership working' as well as the more interpersonal issue of 'people being more able and willing to share what they have across organisational boundaries'.
- Improved capacity for data analysis as a way to improve evidence use was mentioned as a common theme in this open-ended question as well, including 'supporting staff to critically analyse data'.
- A new issue brought up when asked about improved use of evidence for the CPP was the suggestion of a specific 'data hub' or 'portal' where CPP partners would be able to access one another's evidence and data.

## Key findings

- CPP partners are the most common source for evidence used by CPOs in their work, with local-level evidence, evidence on 'what works' in practice, evidence on shared LOIP outcomes and evidence from NHS, Police, Fire and Health and Social care

identified as the most useful. Importantly, evidence in these same areas was also detailed by CPOs as those which would improve their working; with a consistent focus on more timely local outcome data and best practices data from local projects.

- The open response questions identified a new area of interest in evidence use among CPOs not found in the 2016 survey, that of ‘perception-based data’. CPOs noted a desire for more evidence that captures the voices of a wide variety of community members which could improve the way they work. A tension was identified between the usefulness of high-level outcome indicators when speaking with community members, where opinions on issues may differ from what indicators report; suggesting a need to bring together both types of evidence in CP work.
- A majority of CPOs were not found in either survey to use evidence that reports ‘best value for money’ in achieving outcomes (SOA outcomes in 2016, and LOIP outcomes in 2018), perhaps because this type of data may not be available to them (which resonates with a need for more local data identified by CPOs in 2018). A majority of CPOs in 2018, however, are using research to understand inequalities often, which suggests that CEA may be having an impact in focusing attention on inequalities.
- Some of the main data challenges faced by CPOs in their work were remarkably consistent for both groups of CPOs surveyed, identifying particular challenges in their ability to undertake their own research, the resources to commission research from others, and the inability to find data that is appropriate to the spatial scale needed. The inability to undertake their own research was also an issue brought up by CPOs when asked about their skills, where skills gaps in research were identified and where more training may be particularly valuable; a finding consistent with earlier What Works Scotland work on the public sector workforce in other policy areas (Bynner and Whyte, 2016; Seditas, 2014).

## Section VI: Understanding how CPPs work

Our focus in this survey is on issues that underpin partnership arrangements and interactions. In particular, inclusion, interdependence and quality of deliberation are highlighted in the literature as three core dimensions in successful collaborative governance (Innes & Booher, 2010, 2003). In the context of CPPs, inclusion refers to the diversity of perspectives brought into CP activities; interdependence refers to the extent to which CP partners feel that they need each other in order to get things done, thus being incentivised by the prospects of ‘collaborative advantage’ (Doberstein, 2016); and quality of deliberation refers to the quality of communication during meetings.

The aim of this section is to explore key dynamics and dimensions that have an impact on how well CPPs function as platforms for partnership work, including:

- focus of CPP meetings at various levels
- inclusion and deliberation at the CPP Board
- interaction and leadership across the CPP
- the added value of CP collaboration.

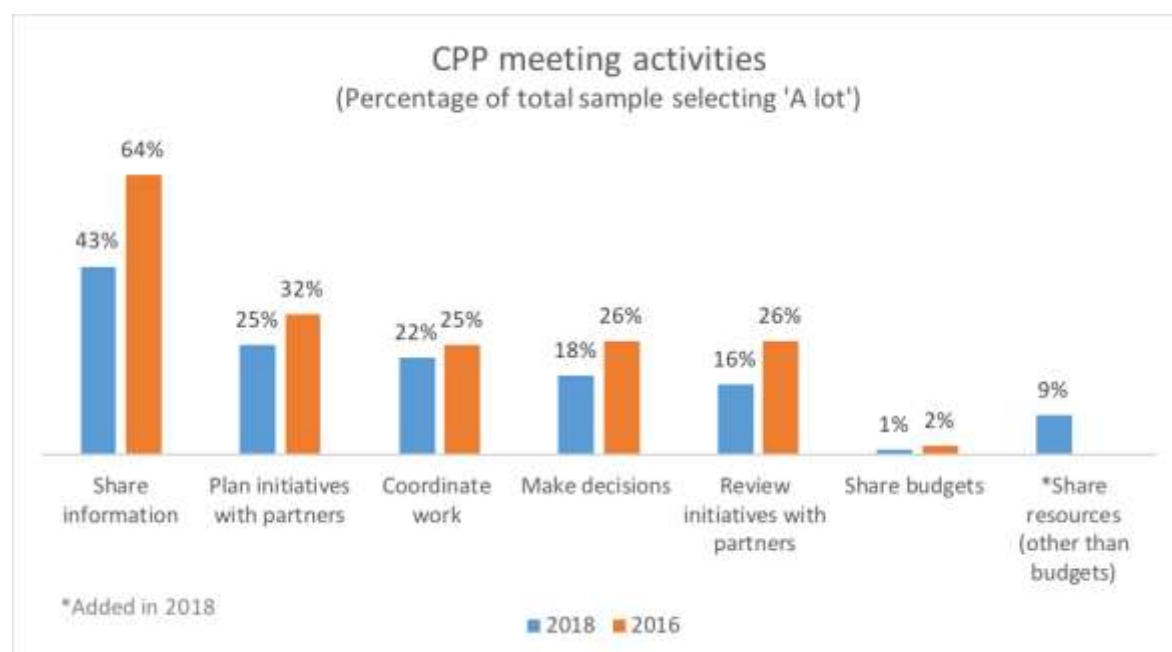
### Main activities of CPP meetings

We asked survey participants about the extent and range of collaborative activities that occur at CPP meetings (Figure 16). The range of activities are also broken down by the different types of meetings that occur across the CPP (see Appendix B). Figure 16 details the seven primary activities and the percentage of respondents in 2018 and 2016 who report that they occur in CPP meetings ‘a lot’. In each of the activities (except for ‘Share resources (other than budgets)’, which was added in the 2018 survey), the 2018 sample have a lower percentage of the group reporting that the activities listed occur in the meetings ‘a lot’. This gap is most prominent in the percentage of respondents who say they share information ‘a lot’, with 43% responding in this manner in 2018 compared to 64% in 2016, which is a statistically significant difference.

Figure 16 indicates that CPP meetings are spaces primarily for sharing information. A much smaller proportion of CPOs report CPP meetings as a space for collaborative decision-making or a space where they critically review one another’s projects or initiatives. This initial question suggests that the core aspect of deliberative quality may not occur in these meetings as much as is desired; an issue returned to in subsequent sections. Finally, what also seems clear from both of these survey results is that CPP meetings are not reported as spaces where partnership working entails sharing budgets or, to a lesser extent, resources. The category ‘sharing resources’ is new and reflects that a small number of CPPs do actively collaborate by sharing resources, if not budgets.

This resonates with findings from successive Audit Scotland reports regarding, more broadly, the sharing of assets and resources (Audit Scotland, 2016, 2013, 2014). The more

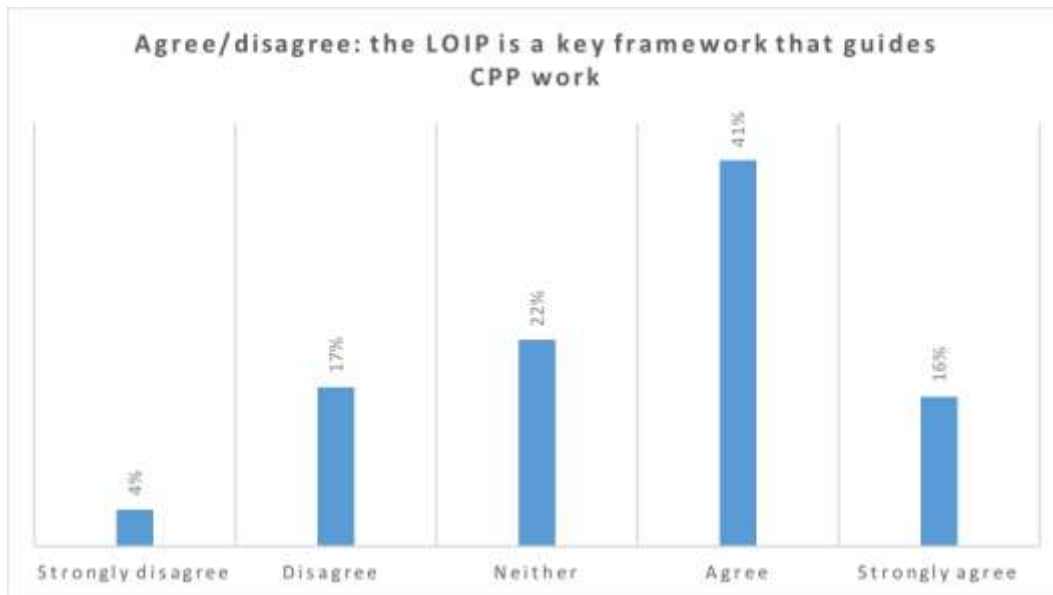
recent report notes that despite progress in joint working: ‘we have yet to see CPP partners sharing, aligning, or redeploying their resources in significantly different ways and on a larger scale to deliver the CPPs’ priorities in line with the 2013 agreement on joint working on community planning and resourcing’ (Audit Scotland, 2016, p. 5).



**Figure 16: CPP meeting activities; percentage of sample identifying the activity happens ‘A lot’, 2018 and 2016 samples**

## What guides the work of the CPP?

We are also interested in whether the LOIP (formerly SOA) is the key framework that guides the work of the CPP: here, we see that in 2018 over half of respondents (57%) either agree or strongly agree with this statement (Figure 17). When viewed in comparison to 2016 responses to the similarly worded question about the Single Outcome Agreement, CPOs’ opinions about the value of the LOIP are more positive than that reported on the SOA (only 17% of the 2016 sample agreed with the statement that the SOA is a key framework). This suggests that the 2018 sample has more buy-in to the LOIP as a shared frame to guide their work than to the previous SOA, and that the LOIP is providing more of a shared focus to tackle priorities through collaborative action at the local and strategic levels. What is perhaps notable is that nearly a quarter are neutral in this response, which might suggest that the connection between the LOIP in the CPP may not be as explicit for some CPOs.



**Figure 17: The LOIP is a key framework that guides CPP work (n = 76)**

## Inclusion at the CPP board

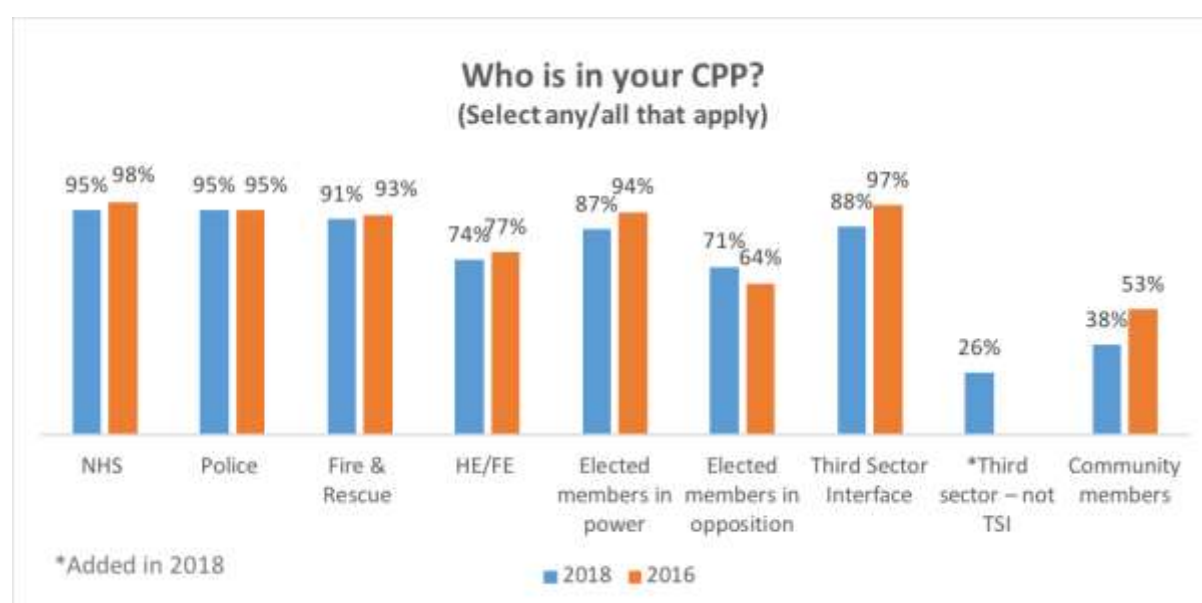
This section explores inclusion at CPP board, where we are interested in two types of inclusion, external and internal. External inclusion refers to the extent that diverse relevant actors are present at the CPP board, while internal inclusion refers to whether those actors have a meaningful opportunity to participate and exercise influence during board meetings. In other words, external inclusion is about getting a place at the table while internal inclusion is about the capacity to shape conversations and decisions once there (Young 2000).

In terms of external inclusion, as in the 2016 sample there is strong representation of NHS, Police, Fire and Rescue, Elected members in power and the Third Sector Interface (TSI) reported by the 2018 CPOs (Figure 18). In 2018 respondents were also asked if they had any other third sector board members not from the Third Sector Interface, and a quarter of respondents indicated that they had other third sector participation on their board. This is an interesting finding, given that TSIs were created partly to provide third sector representation in CPPs (and other governance partnerships). Further research may elucidate on what grounds individual third sector organisations (rather than umbrella bodies like TSIs) are being included on the board and whether this is improving third sector representation (a challenge we explore in Cullingworth and Escobar, forthcoming).

However, there are notably lower percentages of respondents who report community members on the CPP board in 2018 (38% in 2018 compared to 53% in 2016), the only area where that was a statistically significant difference between the two surveys ( $p = 0.06$ ). We were expecting that the CEA would contribute to an improvement in community

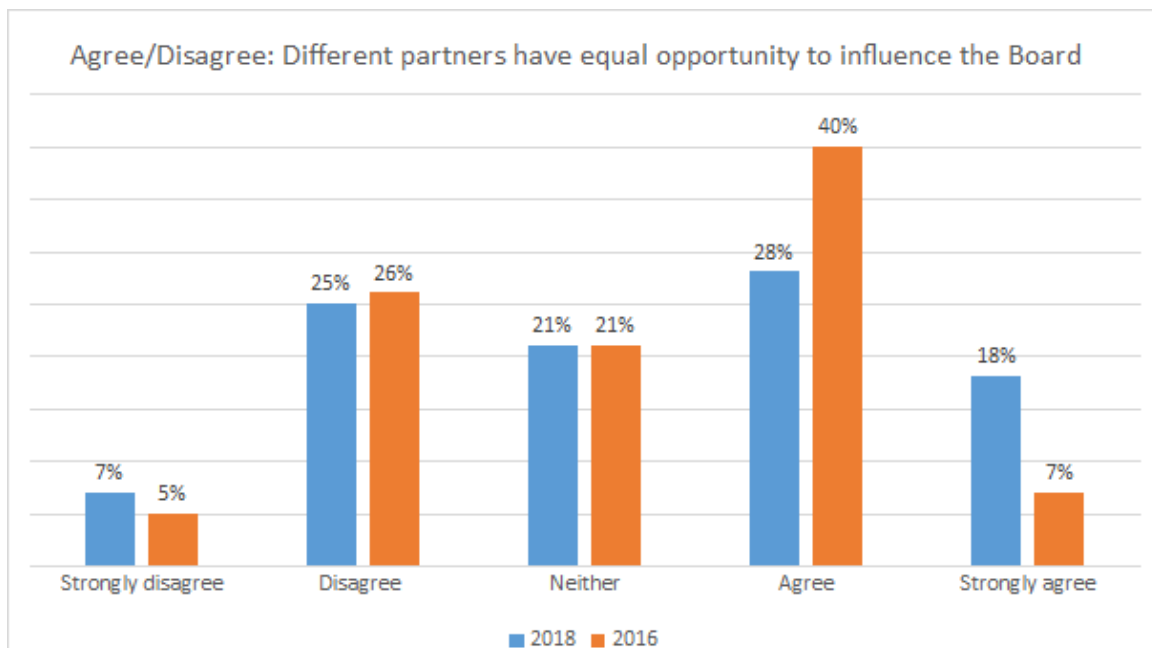
representation at all levels of a CPP, but this data suggests that boards seem now less inclusive than in 2016. Further research is needed to understand the reasons behind this – for example, is it a matter of community representatives exiting the boards or not being invited into them? Or is it perhaps that CPPs are improving subsidiarity and thus community representation happens at more local levels? In any case, it can be challenging to find a way of representing communities at CP strategic level often due to a lack of recognisable and/or legitimate intermediaries. In some places, community councillors can play this role but the presence and legitimacy of community councils is patchy and contested across the country (Escobar, 2014a). In addition, community representation may be seen as more appropriate at the local level of the CPP, albeit this is problematic given the policy ambition to ensure that CP at all levels features meaningful community engagement.

The responses also reflect a high level of elected member representation including, somewhat surprisingly, opposition politicians. This finding goes some way to counter potential critiques of a democratic deficit and disconnection between collaborative governance in CPPs and the representative institutions of local government. We explore how both of these samples interact with elected members further in Section VII.



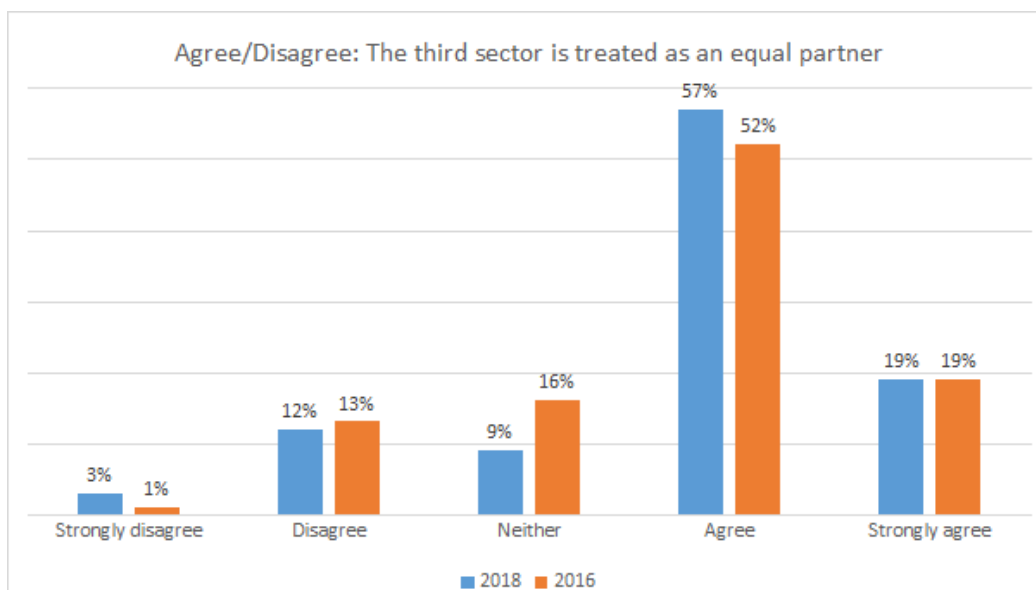
**Figure 18: CPP Board members, 2018 and 2016 samples**

In terms of internal inclusion, Figure 19 shows that there is a more mixed response to whether CPOs believe that different partners have equal opportunity to influence the board. In particular, there seems to be evidence in 2018 of an improvement in the opinion that different partners have greater equality of influence, with 18% strongly agreeing with this statement in 2018 compared to 9% in 2016 (statistically significant at the 0.10 level,  $p = 0.07$ ).



**Figure 19: Different partners have equal opportunity to influence Board, 2018 and 2016 samples**

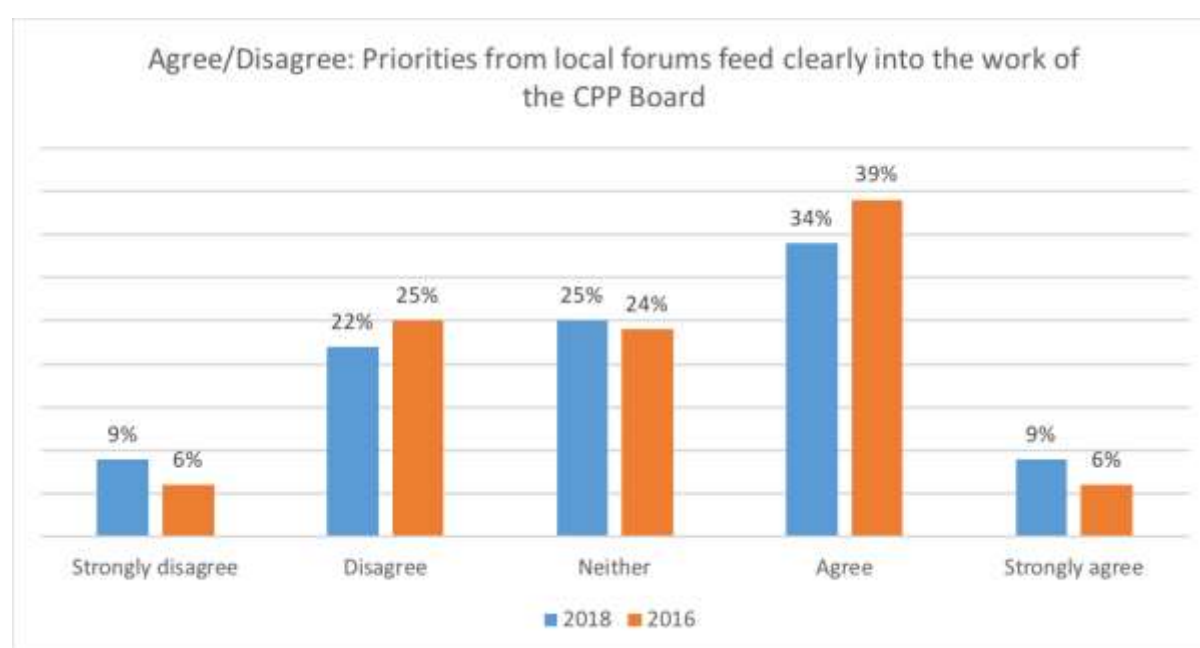
Figure 20 adds more nuance to this information, and reports that there is generally agreement or strong agreement that the third sector is treated as an equal partner in the CPP (more than half of respondents in both of the surveys). The consistent response pattern in both surveys provides more evidence that the positive perspective of these CPOs are somewhat in contrast to the views of TSI representatives who in previous studies have been critical of their unequal role in some CPPs (Escobar, 2014b, 2015a). This may reflect progress being made, or indeed that CPOs may not always be aware of some of these views amongst TSI representatives.



**Figure 20: Third sector as an equal partner, 2018 and 2016 samples**

There seemed to be a tension in the open responses from CPOs when asked what things could improve the equality of influence on the board related to the voice and influence of local government partners. Multiple respondents commented that the board is too ‘council-heavy’ and that the board needs to become a more ‘level playing field’. Relatedly, others noted that ‘it still falls greatly on the Council to support the CPP’, and that other partners sharing and taking ownership of the priorities of the CPP, as well as sharing resources, could improve the work in the CPP. This indicates that there is some way to go to meet the objective embedded in the CEA that all partners, and not just the council, take more proactive roles in driving the work of the CPP.

We were also interested in whether there has been any change in opinion about the influence of local priorities on the work of the board, for which we found limited evidence in 2016 (Figure 21). Rather, more than half of the respondents in both surveys are either neutral on this matter or they disagree that priorities from local partnerships and public forums feed into the work of the CPP board. The consistent responses to this question in 2018 support the ongoing critiques of the disjuncture between local and strategic decision-making and inclusion in CPPs (e.g. Audit Scotland, 2016, p. 20) and is an aspect of CP where the CEA does not yet seem to have an impact. This is problematic given CEA’s emphasis on ensuring that CPP work at strategic level responds to priorities generated in local areas –a key aim of both LOIPs and Locality Plans.



**Figure 21: Priorities from local forums feed clearly into the work of the CPP Board, 2018 and 2016 samples**

For the roughly 45% of respondents who agreed that local priorities feed into the work of the board, respondents noted in open responses that Locality Plans in particular serve as a



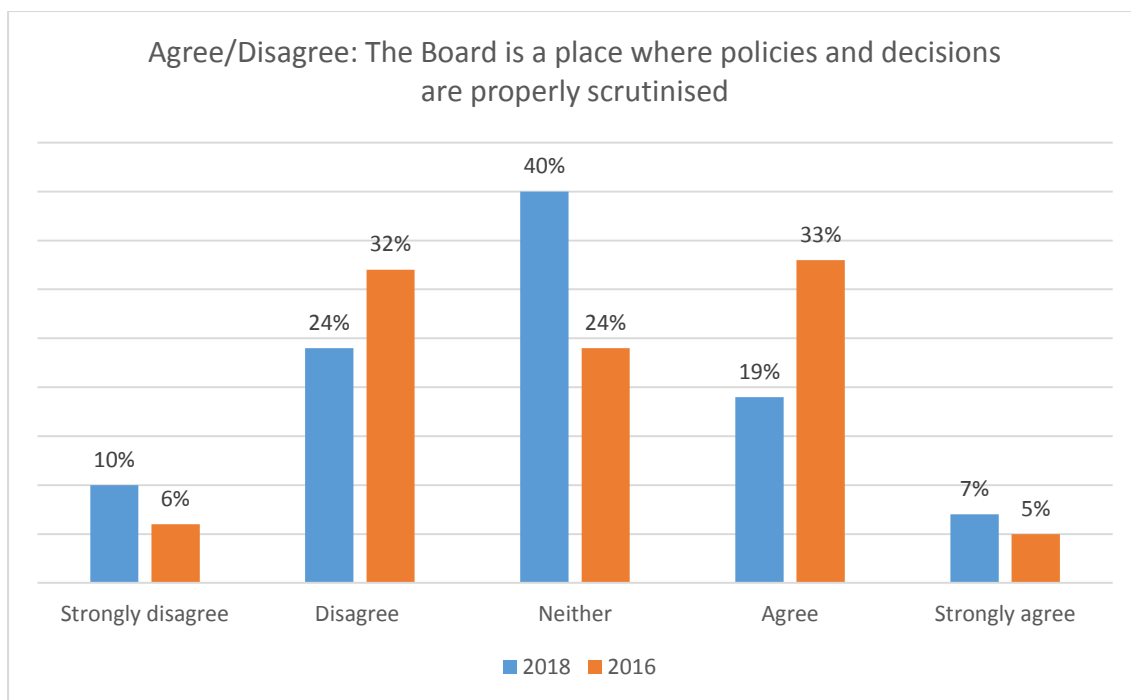
‘golden thread’ from the LOIP and area partnerships to the CPP. Others noted that the LOIP itself was a space where local priorities made themselves known, both through consultation activities that informed the creation of the LOIP and when communities created action plans themselves that fed into the LOIP.

## Deliberation at the board

Deliberative quality<sup>7</sup> depends, amongst other things, on the level of reciprocal scrutiny between partners, and this entails engaging meaningfully with disagreements about competing priorities and perspectives (Roberts & Escobar, 2015, pp. 89-91). High deliberative standards seek to ensure that decisions are made on the basis of the best evidence and arguments available, as determined through robust deliberation amongst partners (Escobar, 2017b, pp. 425-430). Two questions discuss the deliberative quality at the CPP board meetings. The first question details whether respondents agree or disagree with the statement, “The Board is a place where policies and decisions are properly scrutinised” (Figure 22) and the second details the extent of disagreement that takes place at board meetings (Figure 23). Figure 22 indicates that for both the 2016 and 2018 surveys the level of scrutiny reported at the CPP board is rather limited, but there is a distinct divergence in responses between the first and second survey in the percentage of respondents who agree with the statement, “The Board is a place where policies and decisions are scrutinised”. In the 2018 CPO sample respondents are more likely to be neutral regarding this statement compared to 2016 and there is smaller percentage who agree that decisions are scrutinised at board meetings. The differences are statistically significant ( $p = 0.06$  and  $p = 0.03$  respectively).

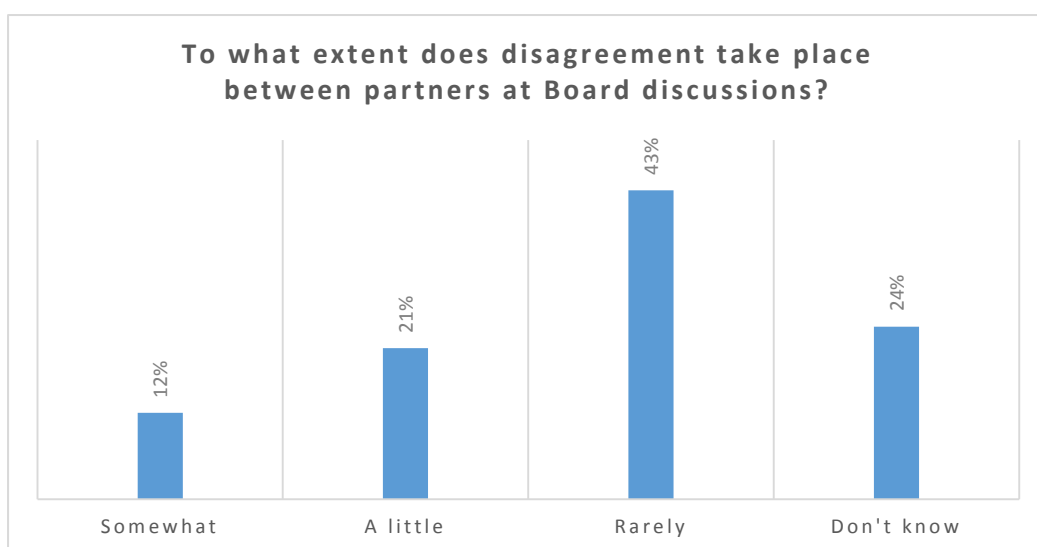
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<sup>7</sup> Deliberation is a form of communication that can support robust decision-making and governance (Escobar, 2011; Roberts & Escobar, 2015; Escobar & Elstub, 2017; Fung, 2004; Dryzek, 2010). Deliberative quality matters because assessing CPPs according to deliberative standards can help to ensure that priorities and services are being developed on the basis of: critical engagement with the best available evidence; inclusion of diverse perspectives that can shed light on the issue at hand; respectful dialogue that enables working through differences and disagreements, including productive exchanges of reasons, emotions and values; and conclusions/recommendations/decisions that reflect informed and considered judgement.



**Figure 22: The CPP Board is a place where policies and decisions are scrutinised, 2018 and 2016 samples**

The second issue that details interactions at the meetings is the extent of disagreement, which is not directly comparable with the 2016 survey (Figure 23). The responses in 2018 (n = 75) indicate that in general there is rarely or very little disagreement between partners in at the meetings. This type of response pattern is consistent with that of the similarly worded question in the 2016 survey, where most respondents believed that disagreement at board discussions was not particularly common.



**Figure 23: Extent of disagreement at Board discussions, 2018 sample (n = 74)**

In general, then, we find that the deliberative quality is relatively low at CPP board meetings for both the samples surveyed, which can be problematic if a CPP wants to ensure that priorities are developed with a wide and critical engagement with the evidence among many informed partners. Interestingly, this lack of deliberation was also noted as a challenge to their partner relationships (noted in the next subsection), both at CPP board meetings but also at other meeting types.

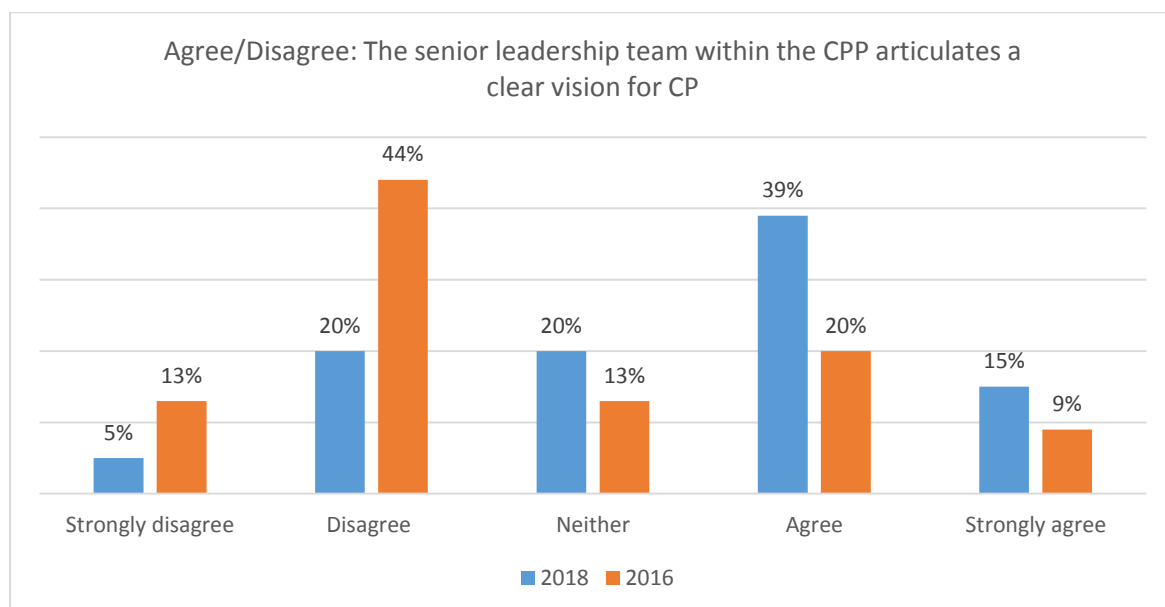
## Interaction and leadership at the board

The effectiveness of CPP board meetings and the deliberation at board meetings is largely dependent on the relationships of partners on the board. In 2018, we asked respondents to elaborate in an open-ended question on the challenges of these relationships. Some of the main challenges to partner relationships brought up by multiple respondents were:

- Reconciling local and strategic priorities, which was brought up by the most respondents. This can mean that in CPPs there are different priorities among CPOs in area partnerships and CPP Board members or there are ‘different priorities set by the organisations themselves on the CPP and the Scottish Government’. One respondent noted that this can be felt by a “lack of a shared understanding of local needs, circumstances or aspirations”, where another noted that “national organisations whose agendas are set at the national level struggle to ‘do local’”.
- Turnover and inconsistency of personnel at board meetings, which “make it hard to build and maintain the relationships and trust that is vital to partnership working”.
- Equality of influence in the CPP: multiple people mentioned here again, as noted in the previous questions, that the council “is still regarded as the lead partner”, which may lead to lack of equality of contribution from other partners in discussions.
- Lack of meaningful challenge and deliberation at meetings between partners: one respondent mentioned in particular that, “the CPP Board environment doesn’t always lend itself to challenge ... the only challenge comes from the Leader of the Opposition or other Council members. Other partners tend to not contribute to discussion in the larger meeting”.

In both surveys, respondents were asked about how they feel about the senior leadership of the CPP (Figure 24). Respondents from the 2018 survey have a more positive opinion of senior leadership, with 54% of respondents agreeing (39%) or strongly agreeing (15%) with this statement than in the previous survey compared to just 29% of those in the 2016 survey, a difference that is statistically significant. This improvement is encouraging and may be the result of the CEA focusing work in the CPPs on creating the first round of LOIPs, which was an avenue where senior leadership could exercise a new vision for the community planning in their area of influence. Further qualitative work with public service leaders by

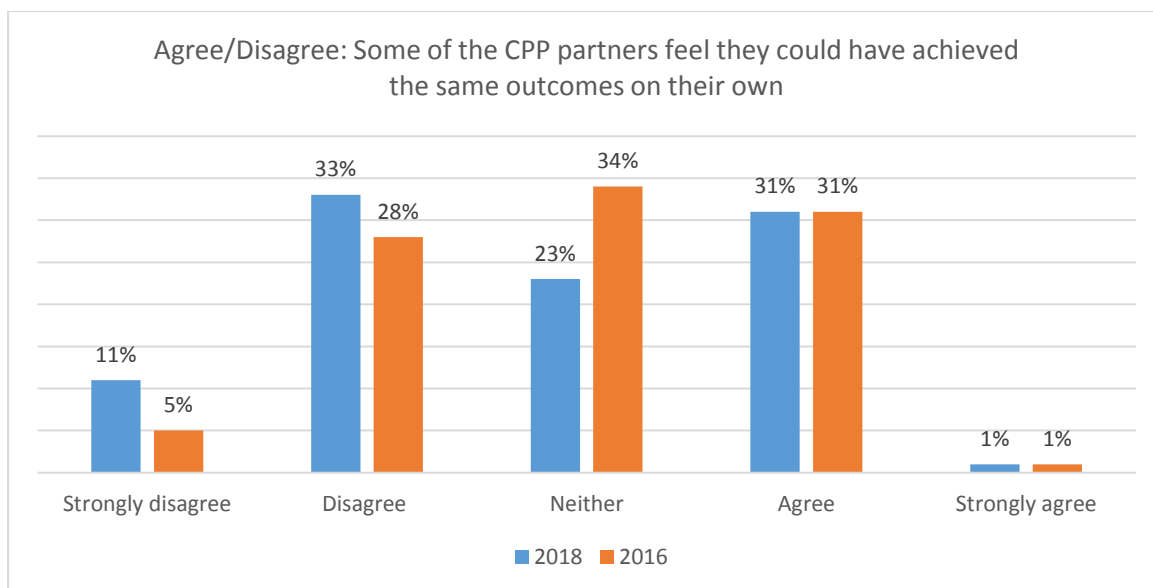
What Works Scotland identified that changing local structures and projects (like LOIPs) can serve as a driver for changing public service leadership, where new teams and collaborations can emerge and more ‘adaptive leadership’ styles can develop (Aberdeenshire CPP and What Works Scotland, 2018).



**Figure 24: Senior leadership in the CPP articulates a clear vision, 2018 and 2016 samples**

## Added value of the CPP

Finally, respondents were asked questions about the added value generated by community planning work: two direct questions and an open response. Both questions with discrete responses were also asked in the 2016, which allows us to investigate changes to CPO opinions in the 2018 survey (n = 73). In general, we found that in both surveys the opinions are slightly mixed about the added value of the CPP when agreeing or disagreeing with the statement “Some of the CPP partners feel they could have achieved the same outcomes on their own”. There seems to be some sign of a positive change to this question, but the difference is not statistically significant so the actual change is unclear (Figure 25). The mixed results suggests that CPOs are still sceptical about the extent to which some CP partners see the value of partnership work.

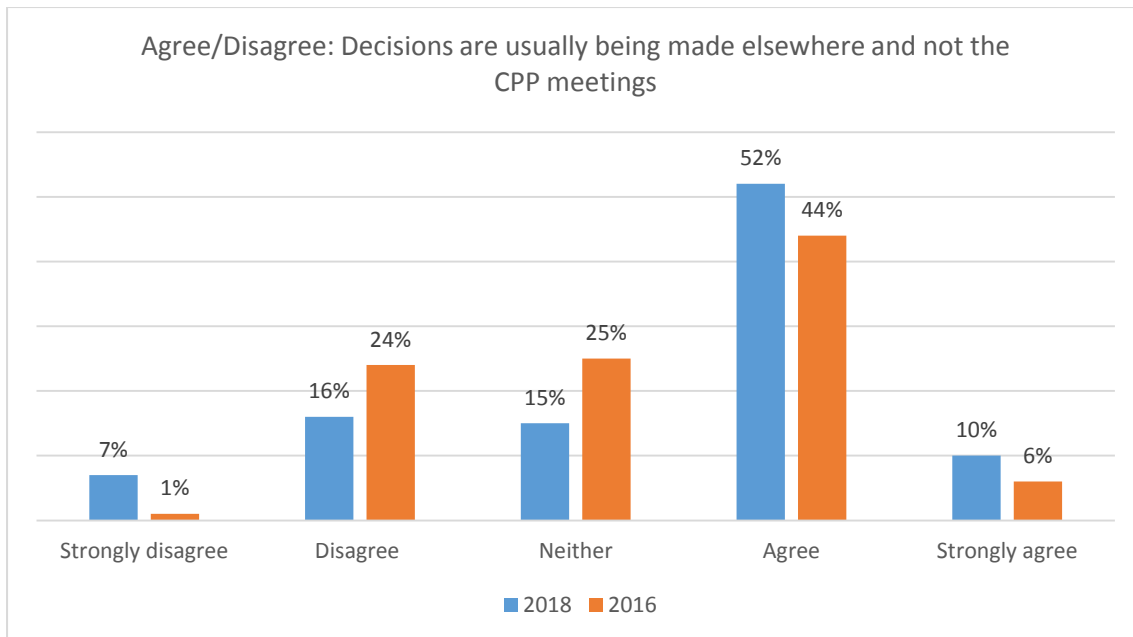


**Figure 25: CPP partners could have achieved the same outcomes on their own, 2018 and 2016 samples**

The second question on added value details if respondents believe decisions are made outside of the CPP meetings (Figure 26). In the 2018 survey around 62% of respondents believe the CPP meetings are not the place where decisions are being made, with slight increases in the percentage of respondents in both of the agree categories in 2018. However, the differences in proportions between the 2016 and 2018 samples are not statistically significant<sup>8</sup>.

Because of the consistency in responses in both surveys we can be confident in saying that around at least half of CPOs surveyed believe that the CPP meetings are not the place where decisions are being made. This echoes the responses about the CPP board as a place where scrutiny of policies is not common and disagreement (as a proxy for deliberative quality) is rare. The consistent results in the 2018 survey on both of these discrete questions give some credence to the argument that CPPs are sometimes seen as ‘secondary arenas’ for policy and decision making (Escobar, 2015a), with core business carried out elsewhere (e.g. through bilateral engagement between the larger organisations). From this perspective, CPPs seem to function more as spaces for sharing information and planning and coordinating initiatives, than as key sites for co-production and collaborative decision-making.

<sup>8</sup> Responses to these two questions were also broken down for the 2018 sample by the CPP meeting activity the respondents are involved in, where there is very little variation in responses by meeting type (Appendix C)



**Figure 26: Decisions usually made elsewhere and not the CPP meetings, 2016 and 2018**

## What activities and projects wouldn't happen without your CPP?

Despite some of the less positive responses to the closed survey questions on the added value of the CPP, respondents reported specific examples of activities and projects that would not happen without the CPP and include:

“Developing and taking forward activity to minimise the effects of poverty on our communities is a partnership effort in the anti-poverty strategy and action plan. There was strong partnership working from the beginning, with commitment from all community planning partners to develop the strategy. The action plan is jointly taken forward by a range of partners, including NHS, DWP, Skills Development Scotland and strong involvement from the third sector. This joint action plan ensures organisations are working better together (e.g. through the new advice referral portal), are sharing information and are avoiding duplication in service delivery. Partners have also been involved in a joint community engagement activity to inform the refreshed strategy in 2018 – this avoids consultation fatigue of each organisation going out and talking to the same people.”

“The 'Anchor Project' - a local initiative designed to address failure demand and meet the needs of disadvantaged families in a way that works for them. This is a 'systems change' project that could not have been established without the support of a wide range of partners including NHS, LA Children's Services and Police Scotland.

“The collaboration has allowed for effective project planning and sharing of resources to recruit new staff to drive the new ways of working required.”

“One project that was undertaken by an Area Partnership in collaboration with the various groups within the community and is a PB project, called Your Voice Your Choice. This project was approximately 80% planned and organised by the community involved local groups, community councils, local government, third sector partners, schools, local businesses, and for this one project over 300 volunteer hours. It provided £27,000 for projects that were developed by young people between 8 and 18 and voted on by young people, linked to improving health and wellbeing, improving safety, strengthening their community, raising achievement, or reducing poverty.”

For more examples of CPP projects provided by CPOs, see Appendix D.

## Key findings

- Across a number of questions we found that deliberation is not a particularly prominent feature of CPP meetings, with CPOs in both surveys indicating that policies are generally not scrutinised nor is there much disagreement at meetings. Notably, CPOs do not see CPP meetings as a place where decisions are made. Overall there is low deliberative quality at these meetings, an issue that remained consistent for this group as well as the 2016 survey group.
- Inclusion in the CPP board – both internal and external – was found to change in some areas from the 2016 to the 2018 survey. While we expected to find a higher proportion of community members involved in the CPP board, we instead found a lower proportion reported by the 2018 respondents. On the other hand, there were encouraging results from the 2018 survey on internal inclusion, with CPOs in 2018 reporting more equitable influence among all partners on the board and more agreement that the third sector is treated as an equal partner. However, CPOs still indicated in open responses that the council drives a lot of CPP decisions, and suggests there is still progress to be made to meet the objective that all partners play an active role in CPP decision-making.
- CPOs in 2018 were also asked to detail in an open response what some of their key challenges are in partner relationships and included the challenge of reconciling local and strategic priorities, high turnover of personnel at meetings and the lack of meaningful deliberation at meetings. Despite the issues and challenges noted by CPOs in this section of the survey they were still able to detail concrete activities and projects in their area /local authority that would not have happened without the CPP, which is encouraging.



## Section VII: Community engagement in community planning

Community engagement has remained a recurrent challenge throughout the history of CPPs and is arguably one of the most underdeveloped aspects of CP work (Audit Scotland, 2006, 2013, 2014, 2016; Cowell, 2004; Sinclair, 2008; Scott, 2012; Matthews, 2012). This section explores the role of community engagement in CPPs, the types of processes deployed, their impact on decision-making and the challenges of organising community participation.

An important finding from the 2018 survey is that the vast majority of CPOs surveyed consider community engagement activities to be an important part of the work of the CPP (87%, Figure 27). For the 2018 group of CPOs, their responses indicate a very different and far more positive opinion on the extent to which CE activities are a part of the CPP. In the 2016 survey, only 27% agreed with the statement that ‘CE activities are a key part of how CPPs work’. The responses to these questions are not directly comparable, but suggest that there has been a shift in opinion on this issue among the CPO samples. This may be another positive effect of the ongoing implementation of the Community Empowerment Act in the intervening years between the two surveys.



**Figure 27: How important are CE activities to your CPP? (n = 74)**

### Types of community engagement processes

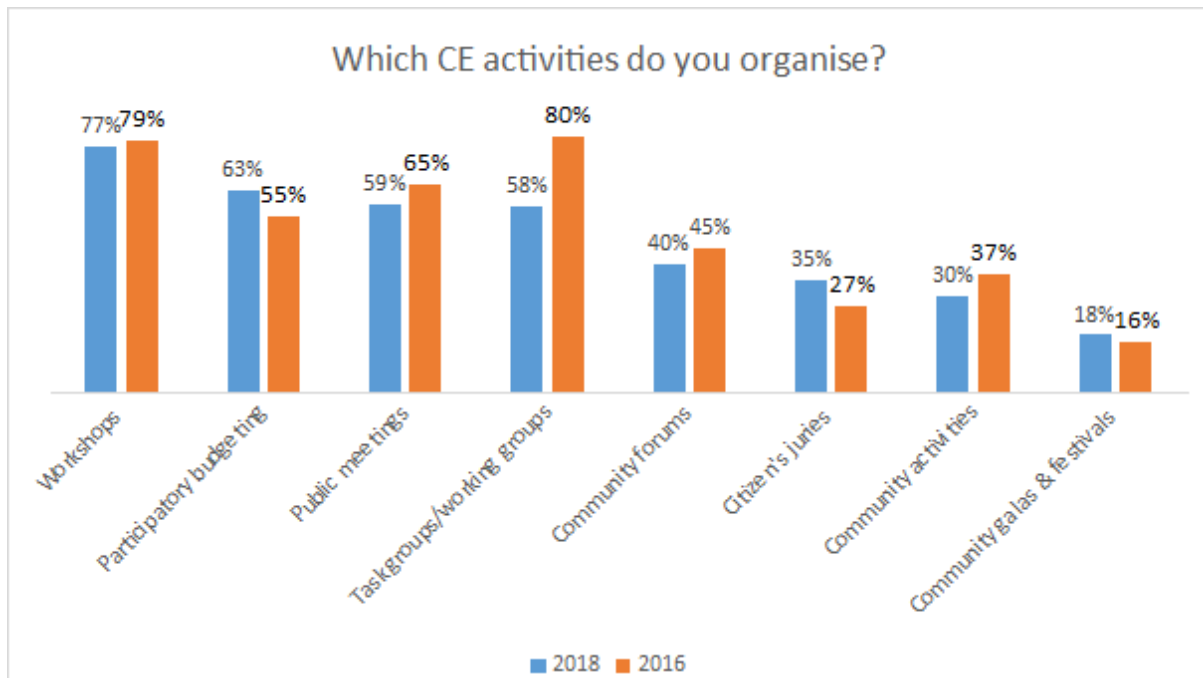
In the 2018 sample, when all CPOs are viewed together, the activity undertaken most is workshops, followed by online consultation and participatory budgeting (Table 8). However, there is variation in which activities are undertaken most based on whether the CPO works in a strategic or local role. For local CPOs participatory budgeting is a prominent part of their

work, where nearly 80% report organising this activity; the same proportion of local CPOs also organise public meetings. Variation is also prominent (perhaps unsurprisingly) between local and strategic CPOs in the amount of community activities they organise, where those in local roles organise more of these events than those in strategic roles.

**Table 8: What sorts of Community Engagement activities do you organise? (n = 74)**

	All CPOs		Local CPOs	Strategic CPOs
Workshops	77%		68%	80%
Online consultations	66%		68%	67%
Participatory budgeting	63%		79%	59%
Public meetings	59%		79%	54%
Task groups/working groups	58%		68%	55%
Community forums	40%		63%	33%
Citizen's juries	35%		21%	41%
Community activities	30%		53%	22%
Other online activities	20%		10%	24%
Community galas & festivals	17%		37%	11%
Other CE activities	7%		5%	7%

When the 2016 and 2018 surveys are compared the most prominent difference is found in the proportion of respondents who organise working groups, down from 80% in the 2016 survey to 58% in the 2018 survey, a difference that is statistically significant (Figure 28). There is a slight uptick in the percentage of respondents in 2018 who report organising democratic innovations such as participatory budgeting and citizen's juries, but these differences are not statistically significant. Despite the drop in the percentage of respondents who organise working groups in 2018, in general we can conclude that the CPO groups in both 2016 and 2018 organise CE activities to a similar extent. The 2018 survey also captured the importance of online consultations – a category not included in 2016.



**Figure 28: Community Engagement activities in the 2018 and 2016 survey**

All of these activities (apart from the two online activities) can also be categorised in three different models of community engagement: traditional versus innovative; models of democracy (see later); and if the activity is deliberative or non-deliberative. Table 9 shows that the toolbox of CPOs active in organising community engagement is wide-ranging and encompasses:

- traditional community engagement processes such as public meetings, workshops, task groups, forums, galas & festivals, activities
- democratic innovations such as citizens' panels and juries and participatory budgeting (cf. Elstub & Escobar, 2018).

**Table 9: Community Engagement Activities and Models of CE**

		Models of Democracy	Deliberative/ Non-Deliberative
Traditional Activities			
	Workshops	Associative	Deliberative
	Public meetings	Direct	Deliberative
	Task groups/working groups	Associative	Deliberative
	Community forums	Hybrid	Deliberative
	Community activities		Non-deliberative
	Community galas & festivals		Non-deliberative
Innovative Activities			
	Participatory budgeting	Hybrid	Deliberative
	Citizen's juries	Direct	Deliberative

The results in Table 8, which details the range of activities that the 2018 CPOs undertake, suggests that CPOs facilitate a range of processes and thus can potentially reach a broad cross-section of the local population. While in general traditional community engagement activities in the 2018 sample are more common, participatory budgeting (PB) for the 2018 was the third-most commonly undertaken CE activity when all CPOs are considered together, a change from the 2016 sample. As mentioned in the 2016 report, the change in the percentage of CPOs reporting that they organise PB is likely a confluence of initiatives such as the Community Choices programme (over £6 million invested so far) and the landmark agreement between COSLA and the Scottish Government to allocate at least 1% of local government budgets via participatory budgeting (see Escobar et al 2018a for an overview of PB in Scotland). This may also be further evidence of the impact of the Community Empowerment Act (detailed in the next section), where participants mentioned PB in particular as an activity type that has gained legitimacy by this legislation.

Here we introduce two other conceptual categories that can help us to analyse these processes. Firstly, there are three models of participatory democracy underlying the activities in Table 8, which we classify as follows according to forum composition:

- Associative democracy, where those invited to participate are community representatives or intermediaries from established community groups and associations (i.e. targeted workshops, task groups/working groups).
- Direct democracy, where those invited to participate are citizens/residents that do not need to be part of existing community groups or associations (i.e. public meetings, citizen panels/juries).

- Hybrid democracy, where those invited to participate are a mix of community representatives/intermediaries and citizens/residents (i.e. participatory budgeting, community forums).

Participation by established community representatives and intermediaries is central to CPPs, with targeted workshops, task groups and working groups as popular activities done both in 2018 and in 2016 samples (Figure 28) and highlights the prevalence of the associative model of participatory democracy. It is important, however, that CPPs do not rely solely on associative models which assume that existing groups and organisations can represent the diverse views of citizens and communities. Therefore, community engagement should include opportunities for direct participation by citizens who do not see themselves represented by existing intermediaries. This seems to be taking place to some extent in CPPs through participatory budgeting, community forums, public meetings and citizens' panels and juries, and the changes to PB activities in particular after CEA implementation indicate that the hybrid model of democracy the CEA is based on is beginning to have an impact.

Secondly, these community engagement activities can also be categorised according to whether they are deliberative or non-deliberative:

- Deliberative community engagement refers to processes that entail discursive participation; that is, engaging in facilitated conversations to address local and/or policy issues (e.g. public meetings, targeted workshops, citizens' panels/juries, participatory budgeting, task groups, community forums).
- Non-deliberative community engagement refers to processes where participation does not necessarily entail formally discussing local and/or policy issues (e.g. galas & festivals, community activities).

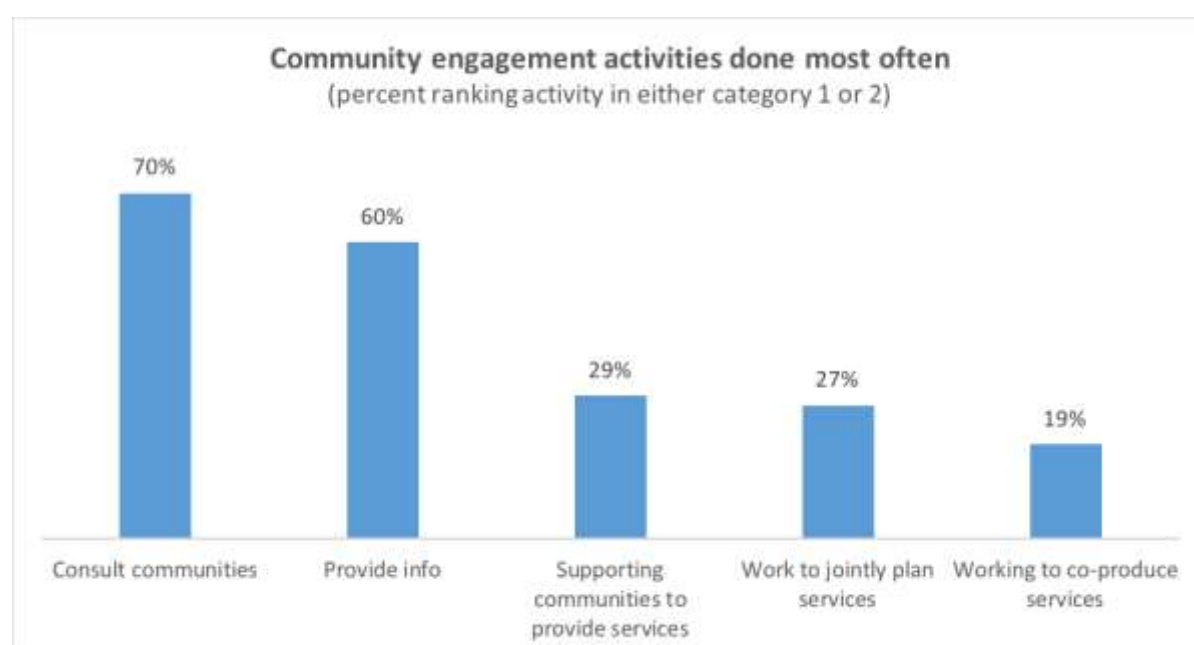
As Table 8 and Figure 28 show, the bulk of CPOs' community engagement work entails deliberative processes, which reinforces the observations made earlier about the importance of facilitation skills – a crucial component in building capacity for deliberative engagement (e.g. Escobar, 2011).

A newly specified question in the 2018 survey asked respondents to rank five of the most notable actions related to community engagement and how much they are undertaken in their community planning work. These activities are:

- Provide information to communities (Inform)
- Consulting communities or service users (Consult)
- Working with communities to jointly plan services (Involve)
- Working with communities to co-produce services (Collaborate)
- Supporting communities to provide services themselves (Empower).

These activities reflect the IAP2<sup>9</sup> spectrum of public participation, ranging from providing information to communities (low participation from communities themselves) to empowering communities to make decisions and provide services through devolution of resources and power.

Respondents were asked to rank the activity 1 if that activity is undertaken most and rank 5 if the activity is undertaken least. Activities that are ranked in either position 1 or 2 in the ranking are considered those that happen ‘most’; Figure 29 details the percentage of respondents who rank the community engagement activities in either rank 1 or 2. We find that in the 2018 sample activities that involve co-production of services with community members (collaborate) and activities that include direct participation in jointly planning services (involve) have the smallest percentage of respondents that indicate these activities are done ‘most’. The most prominent types of community engagement, therefore, seem to be those that entail less devolution of power to communities.



**Figure 29: Community engagement activities done most often (n= 71)**

## Participation Requests

The 2018 survey also provided some of the first information on the new community engagement tool of Participation Requests (PRs), implemented as part of the Community Empowerment Act. PRs were introduced to enable community participation in decisions and processes aimed at improving outcomes for communities (Scottish Government, 2017). Of the 74 respondents, 46% (n = 37) said they are involved in implementing or supporting PRs

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<sup>9</sup> See <https://www.iap2.org/page/pillars>

and provided information about them. As noted in Table 10, a majority of the 37 respondents who are involved in PRs said that none of their time is dedicated to that work. This may be because they have not received any PR from community members, so therefore have not spent any active time working with them. Based on the data from the annual reports published by Public Service Authorities by 30th of June 2018, there were 19 Participation Requests received between the period of 1st of April 2017 and 31st of March 2018 (Hill O'Connor and Steiner, 2018).

**Table 10: Of those who are involved in Participation Requests, approximately what percentage of your time/job is dedicated to them? (n = 37)**

	Freq	%
0%	23	62%
25%	12	32%
50%	2	5%
Total	37	100%

Given that there are very few respondents who spend time working on Participation Requests, their opinion on the impact of Participation Requests in community planning is relatively muted. Around 58% of those who responded to this question believe it's 'too early to say' the impacts of this community engagement tool (Table 11).

**Table 11: Do you think that Participation Requests are contributing to the achievement of better outcomes in Community Planning? (n = 43)**

	Freq	%
Yes	2	5%
No	7	16%
Don't know	9	21%
Too early to say	25	58%
Total	43	100

As perhaps expected, when respondents were asked to elaborate on their responses to the question in Table 11, most simply noted that they had not received any requests. Others noted that PRs are a way for community groups or community members who are already empowered to get in touch in another way, rather than for engaging new community members. One respondent in particular commented on the administration of PRs itself: "It is a heavily complicated administrative, tick box exercise, and a time consuming process which is overly formal", and another noted that, "Communities neither know of nor understand Participation Requests, with the majority of the information coming through those

organisations already sitting in a position of power”. The emerging evidence from this survey suggests that Participation Requests are a tool that is not currently a large part of a CPO’s work, with some CPOs in this sample questioning whether this new tool will be able to truly increase community engagement beyond groups already involved with CP work.

## Impact of community engagement

The survey found that CPOs believe that community engagement activities somewhat influence policy, with 20% saying that these activities influence policy a lot (Table 12). In the similarly worded question in the 2016 survey, a smaller percentage of respondents (8%) strongly agree with the statement, ‘Community Engagement has a significant impact on policy decisions and services’, which suggests that respondents in 2018 have a slightly more positive opinion of how much community engagement activities influence policy. Notably, responses to questions on community engagement impact in both 2018 and 2016<sup>10</sup> contain a large percentage of respondents who are relatively neutral or respond ‘somewhat’, which suggests potentially ambivalent feelings towards whether they believe their community engagement activities influence policies.

**Table 12: To what extent do you think CE influences policy decisions and services? (n = 71)**

A lot	20%
Somewhat	62%
Very little	18%
Total	100

International research highlights the importance of the role of elected representatives in enabling or hindering the impact of community engagement processes on policy and governance (e.g. Klijn & Koppenjan, 2000; Lowndes et al., 2006; Hagelskamp et al., 2016; Edelenbos et al., 2017; Torfing & Ansell, 2017). From Table 13 we see that there is not very frequent interaction between CPOs and elected members in organising community engagement activities, with 78% responding that this happens either seldom or not at all. Engagement activities that involve elected members may therefore only happen a few times a year. The risk of this disconnect is that it can increase public cynicism and the trust gap between citizens and representatives, and communities and institutions. Another risk is that findings generated through community engagement (e.g. drawing on local and experiential knowledge) may not be given meaningful consideration as part of the evidence base to inform deliberation and decision-making by elected members.

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<sup>10</sup> The 2016 survey question on this issue asked respondents to agree or disagree along the likert scale with the statement, ‘Community Engagement has a significant impact on policy decisions and services’.



**Table 13: How often do you work with elected members to organise CE activities? (n = 72)**

Regularly (Daily/Weekly/Monthly)	22%
Not regularly (Quarterly/Not at all)	78%
Total	100

We are also interested in whether there is a relationship between being involved with elected members frequently in CE activities and believing that CE influences policy, explored with a cross-tabulation. The hypothesis here is that those who engage with elected members regularly would have a more positive opinion of whether CE activities influence policy; however this was not found to be statistically significant (Appendix E, Table E1).

The next question is interested in the extent to which CPOs believe that elected members use CE activities to inform their decisions, with the majority responding that input from these activities is used somewhat by elected members (58%) while 18% believe that they are used a lot by elected members (Table 14). In 2016, only 44% of respondents agreed with the statement that “Elected Members use input from community engagement to inform their decisions” and 40% in the neutral category. Again, these questions are not directly comparable, but suggest perhaps that there is a more positive attitude to elected members using community engagement in their decisions in the 2018 survey, and suggests that there is an emerging cohort of more engaged local councillors working alongside CPOs.

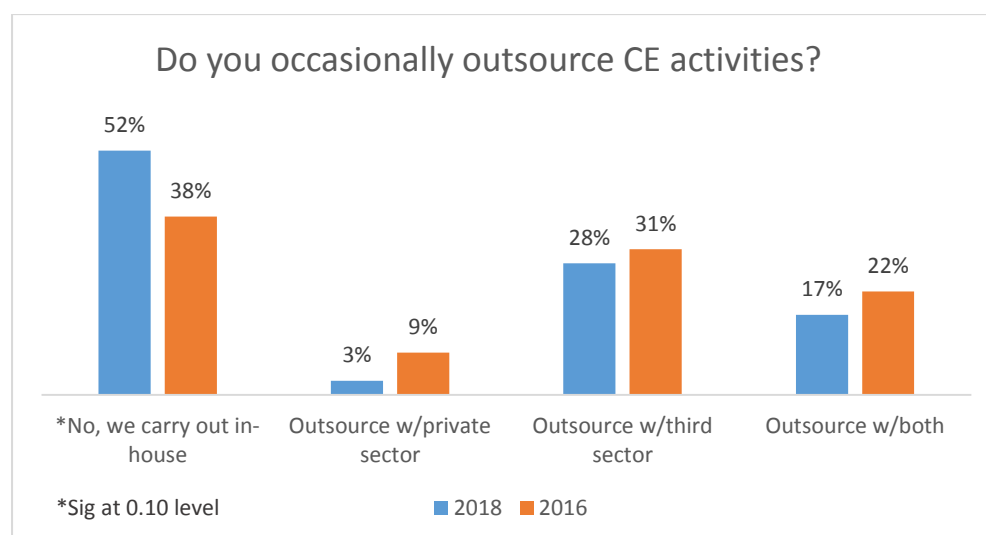
**Table 14: How much do you think the elected members in your area use input from community engagement to inform their decisions? (n = 72)**

A lot	18%
Somewhat	58%
Very little/Not at all	23%
Total	100%

## Challenges of community engagement in CP

One of the challenges of community engagement is the capacity to design and facilitate processes, and therefore we wanted to investigate the extent to which activities are outsourced. The CPOs in 2018 reported a slightly lower percentage of outsourcing community engagement activities, with around half reporting that CE activities are done in-house (Figure 30). The increased proportion of the 2018 sample who do not outsource CE

activities is significantly different than the 2016 sample (at the 0.10 level), and suggests that the CPOs in the second survey have a greater capacity to organise community engagement activities. This may be a result of some in-house capacity building in the wake of the implementation of CEA. But it may also reflect a lack of resources to pay for external support, resulting in growing CPO workloads.



**Figure 30: Outsourcing community engagement activities, 2018 and 2016 samples**

Only 9% of respondents said that this work is mainly outsourced to the private sector which is in contrast to developments in other countries where there is a growing ‘industry of participation’ increasingly populated by for-profit companies (e.g. Lee, 2015). There is some debate about the advantages and disadvantages of deploying in-house expertise versus hiring external community engagement consultants (Escobar, 2017a, pp. 158-159), and this depends for example on local circumstances, quality of contracting and monitoring, and issues about loss of direct control and engagement. However, given that in current policies and legislation community engagement is seen as core CP business, it is important that this can be supported by properly resourced teams of participation practitioners and community organisers within the ranks of the CPP. Improving the level and quality of engagement across CPPs requires building capacity to carry out this work, which can be a challenge.

Respondents were asked in an open response question to identify some of the main challenges to community engagement work. These include:

- *Engagement only from a small section of the community:* multiple CPOs mentioned that engagement primarily from who they describe as ‘the usual suspects’ is a key challenge, where it is therefore “difficult to get a cross section of the community” in participatory events. Therefore, the input of these “regular faces ... does not give a true reflection of the views of the wider community”. One respondent noted in particular those “with lived experience of inequality” simply are not able to engage.

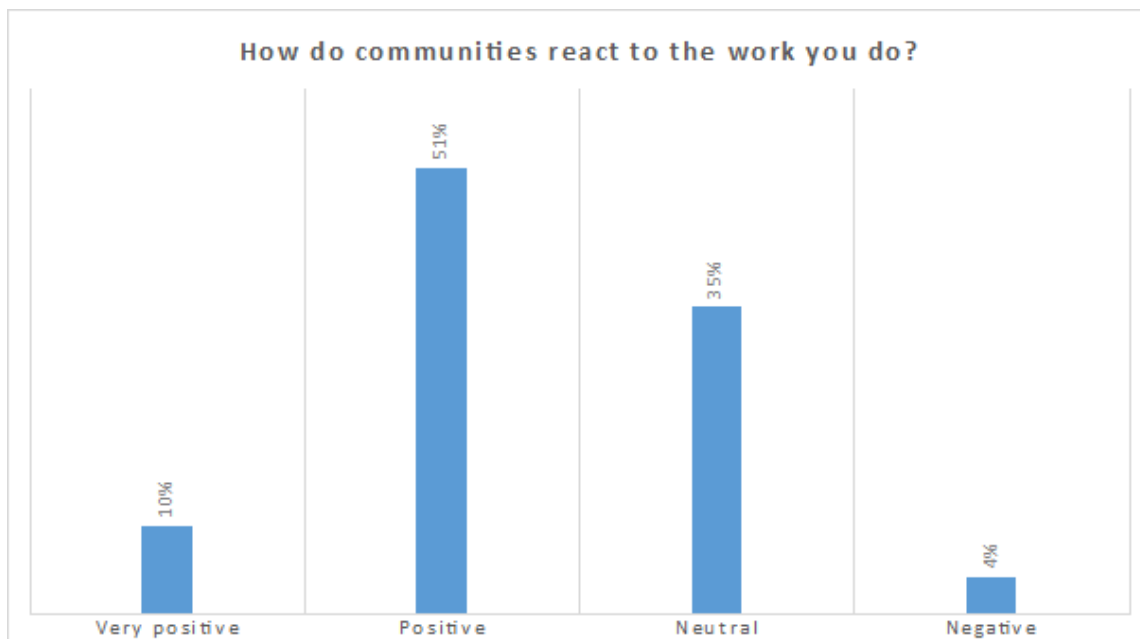
This may be in part due to a CE landscape that might be dominated by associative models (reliant on intermediaries), which may be improved by increasing the use of new methods of direct community engagement.

- *'Consultation fatigue'*: relatedly, the phrase 'consultation fatigue' was brought up by multiple respondents, or as one respondent put it "too much talking and not enough delivering is the general opinion". For the group of community members who are participating in activities, one respondent noted a challenge that there has been a "failure of public agencies to demonstrate how previous engagement activity has influenced decisions", and therefore the community does not feel like their voice is making a difference. One respondent noted pointedly that 'repeating old questions' in multiple CE activities simply 'frustrates communities'. Importantly, this issue was also brought up by CPOs in the 2016 survey as a primary challenge. The issues of consultation fatigue and representation of a small section of the community has also been shown in qualitative research about the mobilisation of evidence in community planning (Bynner and Terje 2018).
- *Lack of understanding of what community planning is and does*: a challenge for CPOs is that community members simply do not know what community planning is, and therefore do not see the benefits in participating. As one respondent put it, "We don't make it clear, accessible or understandable as to how or why people should or could get involved in community planning and the benefits of doing so." Some respondents also noted a "lack of understanding of how public bodies work and a lack of time to explain this," or more bluntly, community planning, "is absolutely not real" to community members. One respondent suggested the language itself of community planning may be the source of the problem, as "the language of outcomes and inequalities leaves many cold – they understand what is wrong physically but not around the 'softer' things –health, poverty, employment, community safety".
- *Mistrust that their voice will make a difference to decision makers*: multiple CPOs noted that a challenge of involving citizens in CP work is 'mistrust and scepticism' that they will be listened to by those who make decisions. One respondent noted that the "feeling that [community engagement] is lip service and the council will do what it likes anyway", leading to disillusionment with CE activities.

Despite these challenges, when asked how communities in general react to the work that they do, CPOs responded mostly 'positive' or 'neutral' (Figure 31); the responses near the middle of the scale are relatively similar in their distribution to the question posed in the 2016 survey<sup>11</sup>.

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<sup>11</sup> The 2016 asked questions to agree or disagree with the statement, 'Communities generally react positively to the work that we do'; with 30% responding neither agree nor disagree and 45% responding agree.



**Figure 31: How do communities react to the work you do? (n = 72)**

Finally, respondents were asked what factors in their opinion are currently influencing the relationship between community members and local public services, particularly within the context of their CP work. Some issues raised by multiple respondents include:

- *Budget constraints/lack of resources due to cuts:* this was the most common issue raised as impacting CPOs-community relationships, with multiple respondents using the term 'austerity apathy' in particular having a negative impact. One respondent mentioned that "budget reductions are making things difficult, as community expectations are not in line with what is available in finance and resources to deliver". Another noted that "there is a fairly widespread fear of reduction in service as a result of reduced public sector spending". This echoes the 2016 survey when a question on budget cuts was included in a closed-ended question. The importance of this issue in the CP landscape is affirmed more strongly here given that it was raised unprompted.
- *Lack of understanding of what the council/CPP can and cannot do:* this is seen as a negative factor in this relationship, where "the council is no longer able to provide the same level of service" which could be better explained to communities. Some respondents also mentioned the lack of understanding between CPOs and 'non-front line staff' on what CE looks like on the ground, which can lead to a lack of trust.
- *'Involving communities to save money':* a point brought up by multiple respondents was the feeling from communities that 'the public sector wants to involve communities to save money' and that this belief was negatively influencing their relationship. One respondent noted that there is "scepticism that public bodies are trying to foist things onto volunteers" in CE activities in the face of budget cuts.

Another noted that: “LAs are cutting back on service delivery or expecting people and communities to pick up responsibility without adequate support nor funding.”

- *Locality planning and local engagement*: the increased focus and action in locality planning was identified generally as a positive factor in this relationship, where ‘local public services are viewed as CPOs assisting and supporting the community’. One respondent noted in particular that part of locality planning that has been particularly positive is that “local steering groups have been set up for each of our locality planning areas – these groups include community organisations and local partners and have included robust community engagement to inform local priorities and actions”. This same respondent noted that the CEA is slowly changing these relationships.

## Key findings

- The 2018 survey showed a shift amongst CPOs in their view of community engagement activities in their daily work, with a strong majority of CPOs noting that CE activities are an important part of their work. This may be another positive effect of CEA implementation.
- The type of CE activities undertaken by CPOs are relatively consistent between the 2016 and 2018 samples, with most of CE undertaken using traditional methods (working groups, workshops, public meetings). However, participatory budgeting was the third most common CE activity reported by the 2018 sample (after ‘workshops’ and ‘online consultations’), suggesting that it is becoming a more prominent part of CP work. Despite this improvement we find that there is still limited progress in increasing activities that devolve power, decision-making and resources to communities.
- There seems to be ambivalence among CPOs in both samples that CE activities influence policy and decision making broadly, although there is evidence of a slight improvement in the 2018 sample feeling that their elected members use input from CE to make decisions. In both samples, however, engagement with elected members in organising CE activities is relatively uncommon (perhaps only happening a few times a year).
- An open question in 2018 provided in greater detail the challenges of CE as seen by CPOs themselves, affirming other recent research (Aberdeenshire CPP and What Works Scotland, 2018): engagement only from a small section of the community; ‘consultation fatigue’; a lack of understanding by the community of what CP is and does; and mistrust that community voices will make a difference in decision-making.
- Despite these challenges, CPOs in both surveys report that communities react generally quite positively to the work they do. Factors that they believe influence the relationship between citizens and public services include budget constraints, a lack

of understanding of what CPPs can and cannot do, a feeling that councils are 'involving communities to save money'; and locality planning – a positive factor.

## Section VIII: Frameworks, policies and reforms affecting community planning

In this final section, we share insights from survey questions that gauged how key national frameworks, policies and reforms are seen by CPOs including:

- National Standards for Community Engagement
- Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act
- National Performance Framework
- Christie Commission

### National Standards for Community Engagement

As with the 2016 sample of CPOs more than 95% percent of respondents (n = 74) are familiar with the National Standards for Community Engagement. Table 15 details that over 87% of respondents in 2018 use the National Standards for a variety of purposes. In nearly every one of the activities listed, a higher percentage of respondents in 2018 CPO sample report using the standards specifically in these activities (though this is not statistically significant), which indicates similar and consistent influence of this framework for both CPO samples, and suggests some momentum created by the relaunch of the Standards in 2016<sup>12</sup>.

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<sup>12</sup> For information about the revised National Standards for Community Engagement see <http://www.scdc.org.uk/news/article/new-revised-national-standards-community-engagemen/>

**Table 15: How have you used the National Standards for Community Engagement? (select all that apply)**

	2018 (n = 74)	2016 (n = 102)
To plan community engagement processes	68%	56%
To monitor community engagement processes	47%	34%
To evaluate community engagement processes	45%	38%
To create community engagement frameworks for the Community Planning Partnership	43%	36%
To create community engagement frameworks for the Council	43%	35%
As part of training for colleagues in the Council	24%	26%
As part of training for colleagues in the Community Planning Partnership	23%	33%
<i>I have not used the National Standards for Community Engagement</i>	13%	19%

## Community Empowerment Act (CEA)

As noted in the Introduction, the CEA was the largest legislative change to community planning in Scotland in the intervening years between the first and second CPO surveys. In all local authorities the policies for CP laid out in the CEA are in their first stages of implementation.

The 2018 survey was one of the first opportunities to investigate the understanding of the CEA and its impact on community planning from the viewpoint of CPOs. The majority of respondents (74%) say they understand the implications of the CEA very well, which is a positive finding particularly in this early stage of implementation (Table 16). This is a very large difference in opinion to the question in the 2016 survey, where only 21% of respondents agreed with the statement that “I understand the implications of the CEA for my work”. As the 2016 survey was taken after the CEA legislation was passed but before guidance was published, the improvement on this question is likely due to the guidance provided to CPOs in the intervening period to begin implementing reforms.



**Table 16: How much would you say you understand the implications of the Community Empowerment Act?**

A lot	74%
Somewhat	24%
Not at all	1%
Total	100

Respondents were also asked both in closed and open-ended questions to discuss the impact of the CEA in their work: 79% report that the impact has been positive (Table 17), with only 1 respondent reporting a negative view.

**Table 17: How would you assess the impact of the Community Empowerment Act for improving community planning? (n = 72)**

Very positive or positive	79%
Neutral	19%
Negative	1%
Total	100%

Respondents were also asked to provide two or three of the main impacts of the CEA on their work; some of the common responses include:

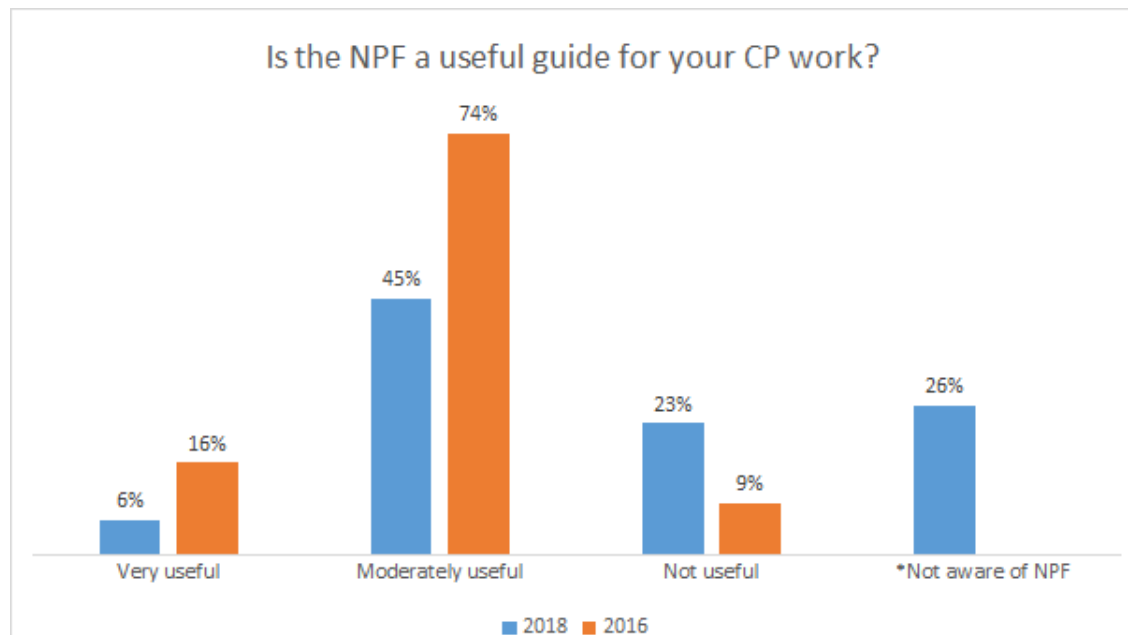
- *A focus/requirement on Locality Plans and the development of LOIPs:* the development of LOIPs and Locality Plans were brought up by the most respondents, with community planning now ‘involv[ed] in the process to decide on the focus of Locality Plans’.
- *Affirmation of community rights:* multiple CPOs noted that the CEA gave rights to groups and communities to have their voices heard by the government, with one CPO noting that ‘community groups are becoming more aware of their new rights and are starting to approach us to be involved, rather than just us going out to them’. This in turn has given “the communities a sense of confidence and value”, with a “commitment [from CPOs] to work differently and bring the community into the heart of decision-making”.
- *Community asset transfer and participatory budgeting:* these two activities were brought up by many CPOs as some of the concrete activities that have been influenced by the CEA. Some expanded on participatory budgeting changes in

particular, where PB “now has legitimacy and a national framework”. This in turn means that for PB, “participants are keen to get involved and see the difference they can make”.

- *Part 2, Community Planning as statutory legislation:* respondents noted that Part 2 of the CEA has been a way for partners to be involved in CP and has entailed some changes to CPOs scope of work. One respondent noted that ‘placing new duties on partners and setting out key principles has necessitated a huge amount of development work to create structures, frameworks and plans to enable effective community planning’.

## National Performance Framework

Questions about the National Performance Framework (NPF) were asked in both waves of the survey. Respondents in 2018 (n = 65) were asked whether the NPF was a useful guide for their work, with a relatively lower opinion of the NPF overall than the 2016 sample (Figure 32). In particular there is a much larger and statistically significant difference in the percentage of respondents who say that the NPF is not a useful guide for their work. And, although not a response category in 2016, the 2018 sample reported that a quarter of respondents were not aware of the NPF. This may be partially due to the new NPF being launched during the course of this survey, with the revised framework perhaps not reaching across all CPPs.



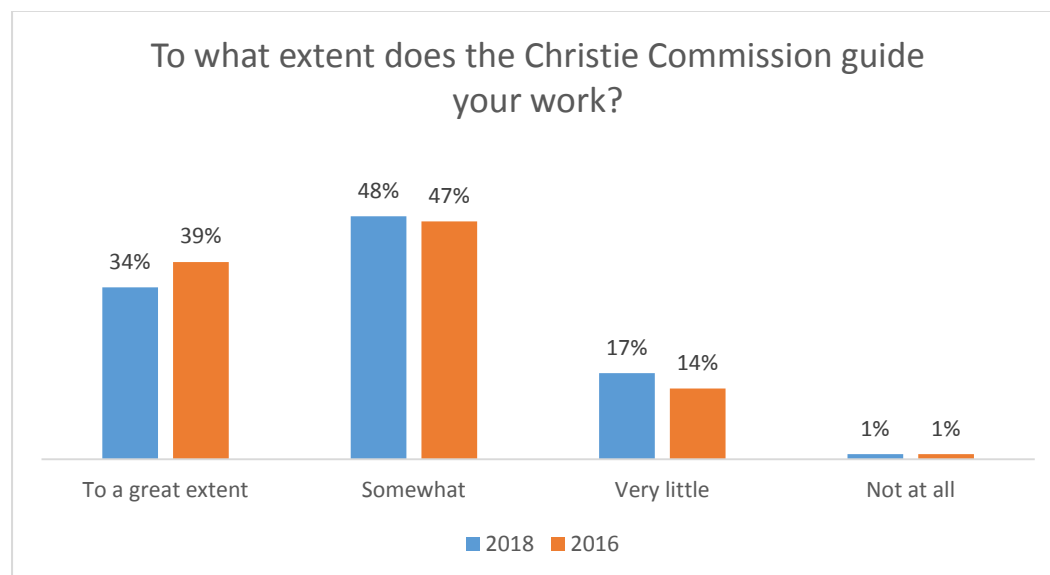
**Figure 32: Is the NPF a useful guide for your work? 2018 and 2016 samples**

When CPOs were asked to elaborate on what aspects of their work are influenced by NPF, the most commonly mentioned impact is aligning LOIP outcomes to national outcomes and targets in the NPF. Some also mentioned the broader influence of providing a ‘clear national

strategic understanding’ of the work: however, when paired with the responses to the closed-ended question in Figure 32, the 2018 sample indicates a far less active relationship with the NPF than the previous group of CPOs surveyed.

## Christie Commission on the Future Delivery of Public Services

In general, as with the 2016 survey, the 2018 sample members affirmed the importance of the Christie Commission on the Future Delivery of Public Services. The majority of respondents reported that Christie guides their work (Figure 33) with nearly identical distribution of responses for both surveys.



**Figure 33: The Christie Commission guiding CP work, 2018 and 2016 samples**

The two surveys taken together affirm that the Christie Commission is probably the most notable guiding framework in the CP field, and has retained its influence in guiding the work of CPOs. However, the level at which Christie guides work seems to differ from the other most notable policy for CPOs, the Community Empowerment Act. The open responses to this question about Christie in particular discuss larger issues of changing the overall focus of CP work to prevention and early intervention, delivering and redesigning services, and increased partnership working. These issues were mentioned by the 2016 survey as well. To the 2018 respondents, Christie seemed to change the way they thought about the field more broadly; whereas responses about the impacts of the CEA included more programme and intervention-specific language at a local level.

## Key findings

- In both surveys of CPOs there is a strong familiarity with the National Standards for Community Engagement, with evidence that they are a consistent influence on their work.
- The CEA was the major policy change in this field between the first and second surveys of CPOs, so it is unsurprising that there is now a large majority of CPOs in 2018 who report their work is positively impacted by the CEA. CPOs report impacts in locality planning and the development of LOIPs; affirming community rights; the use of community action planning and participatory budgeting; and Part 2 placing new duties for partnership working in the CPP – all of which are encouraging developments.
- The Christie Commission was viewed by CPOs in both samples as a key framework guiding the approach to their work, with CPOs detailing broad areas of influence. For 2018 CPOs in particular, Christie seemed to change the way they thought about their work broadly (e.g. prevention, increased partnership working), while the CEA impacted their work at a programme or intervention-level.

## Section IX: Conclusions: Community Planning after the Community Empowerment Act

Community planning partnerships (CPPs) are a central platform for local governance in Scotland. They are key vehicles to drive public service reform in line with the 2011 Christie Commission, and to improve local democracy and equality as proposed by the COSLA Commission on Strengthening Local Democracy and as articulated in the 2015 Community Empowerment Act. This places community planning workers at the frontline of delivering effective processes of collaboration and participation in policymaking and public service delivery.

Consequently, our report has offered an overview of key dynamics, challenges and accomplishments from the perspective of community planning officials (CPOs) across the country. The survey took place two years into the implementation period of the Community Empowerment Act (CEA), and therefore it presented a unique opportunity to capture some of its early impact on community planning practice. This concluding section returns to some of the key issues where we can compare the responses from the 2016 and 2018 surveys in order to track progress (for a more detailed account please see our first report, Escobar et al 2018b).

### Community engagement in CPPs

Our research finds in both 2016 and 2018 that ‘involving communities in policy and decision making’ is an area where CPOs said that they should put more energy into and we find evidence that community engagement and co-production are valued aspects of their work. We find less evidence that CPOs are actually engaging with communities in this way. For example, we found that in 2018 there is a smaller proportion of community representatives who sit on CPP boards, although the factors and consequences of this require further research. CPOs in both surveys respond either neutrally or disagree that priorities from local partnerships and community forums feed into the work of the CPP board. The consistent responses across surveys support the ongoing critiques of the disjuncture between local and strategic decision-making and inclusion in CPPs. This is an aspect where CEA does not seem to have yet made a marked impact, and it’s particularly problematic because it undermines the purpose of Locality Plans (LPs) and Local Outcome Improvement Plans (LOIPs), which are meant to reflect local priorities in the strategic work of a CPP.

More broadly, although CPOs feel that community engagement activities are an important part of their work, they rarely think that these activities actually influence policies and decisions. This may be changing, as a greater proportion of CPOs in the 2018 survey have a positive opinion than in 2016; however, the majority of respondents remain sceptical or neutral on the issue of policy impact. One way that the CEA aims to improve the impact of community voices is in the new mechanism for Participation Requests, introduced to offer

communities a new route for claiming their right to participate in decision-making processes. The emerging evidence from this survey suggests that Participation Requests are not frequently used in CPPs, with some CPOs questioning whether they will be able to truly increase community engagement beyond groups already involved with CP work. It will be valuable to monitor how PRs are being used to ensure that they are not simply giving more power to groups who are already influential and know how to utilise this new tool to further advance their agenda. There is therefore an important role for organisations and networks who work with disadvantaged and disenfranchised groups to improve awareness and utilisation of Participation Requests.

This relates to an important concern raised by CPOs in both surveys; the problem of inclusion and diversity. CPOs worry that community engagement processes tend to repeatedly involve certain groups and individuals, rather than a cross-section of the relevant community (of place or interest). Unless community engagement organisers put in place corrective measures, these processes will tend to replicate the power inequalities at play in any given community (see Lightbody et al., 2017).

The flipside of this argument is that the burden of community participation is often falling on a limited number of groups and individuals who are committing considerable time and effort and thus suffering, in the words of CPOs, 'consultation fatigue'. Over-reliance on a small group of repeat participants can undermine the capacity of CPPs to be reflective of and responsive to the variety of community perspectives and priorities.

In addition, these usual participants tend to be pejoratively labelled as the 'usual suspects'. Instead of simply dismissing those who are already engaged, CPOs should strive to broaden the pool of participants to include a cross-section of the community. This can be particularly challenging for CPOs as they often face mistrust by community members who feel their voice won't be heard by decision-makers, and therefore see little value in participating. It is important to note that sometimes there are good reasons why community engagement is not taken seriously, and its influence needs to be tempered by the perspective of elected members and other stakeholder views. This is particularly the case when only certain community voices are represented (e.g. a vocal and/or well-resourced minority), which can render a community engagement process less useful and legitimate for policy and decision making.

There is thus a vicious circle that binds inclusion and influence. If a process is not fully inclusive then it shouldn't be given undue influence on decisions; but if a process is not going to be influential, then it may feel less worthwhile for citizens to get involved, which subsequently affects diversity and inclusion. CPPs must work harder to turn this vicious circle into a virtuous one by developing inclusive processes that can have legitimate influence in decision-making. This can be done by developing and implementing more democratic innovations such as mini-publics, participatory budgeting and digital crowdsourcing (see Elstub and Escobar, forthcoming).

Some progress is already under way in this area, with a significant expansion of participatory budgeting (PB) across the country. PB was one of the top three activities noted by CPOs when asked what community engagement they organise, a change from 2016. This seems to be one of the more tangible impacts of the CEA and related national policy. Multiple CPOs mentioned PB when asked about the impact of CEA, saying for example that PB ‘now has legitimacy and a national framework’ and that “participants are keen to get involved and see the difference they can make”. PB may therefore give a new lease on life to CPPs, creating incentives for collaboration among partners and boosting CPPs community engagement credentials. When done properly, PB can enable both inclusion and influence, creating a virtuous circle that can strengthen not only CPPs but local democracy more broadly (for more details about PB in Scotland see Escobar et al 2018a).

The survey has also captured other areas where CEA is having impact. Respondents noted that the legislation has spurred action and created momentum that is positively rekindling CP work. For example, the development of LOIPs and LPs were brought up by most respondents to illustrate this new focus and direction. This goes hand in hand with a growing affirmation of community rights. Many CPOs noted that the CEA gives rights to groups and communities to have their voices heard. As one CPO put it, “community groups are becoming more aware of their new rights and are starting to approach us to be involved, rather than just us going out to them”. This in turn has given “communities a sense of confidence and value”, with a ‘commitment [from CPOs] to work differently and bring the community into the heart of decision making’. Community asset transfers were also brought up by many CPOs as some of the more concrete activities influenced by the CEA.

Nevertheless, the research found that the most prominent types of community engagement carried out in CPPs do not usually entail devolving substantial power and/or resources to communities. The survey also reflected some scepticism about whether these developments represent genuine culture change or a more calculated attempt to save money. Multiple CPOs reported feeling from communities that “the public sector wants to involve [them] to save money” and that this belief is influencing their relationship with community members. One respondent noted that there is “scepticism that public bodies are trying to foist things onto volunteers” in the face of budget cuts, while another wrote that “local authorities are cutting back on service delivery or expecting people and communities to pick up responsibility without adequate support nor funding”. More broadly, budget constraints and reduced services and public sector spending were highlighted as issues negatively influencing the relationship between public services and communities; a finding consistent in both 2016 and 2018 surveys.

Finally, the research reflects a more positive attitude to elected members using community engagement in their decisions in the 2018 survey, and suggests that there is an emerging cohort of more engaged local councillors working with CPOs. This may provide a foundation to improve the democratic credentials of CPPs in terms of bringing together community participation and elected representation.

## Partnership and deliberative quality in CPPs

In the vision put forward by the 2011 Christie Commission, and partly advanced by the CEA, there was a strong emphasis on partnership work across organisations and sectors in order to share resources and make better use of existing capacity. The various types of CPP meetings, and board meetings in particular, are one of the primary spaces where partnership work and decision-making are meant to occur. However, around half of CPOs surveyed believe that CPP meetings are not the place where decisions are being made. The consistent results in both surveys strengthens the argument that CPPs are often seen as ‘secondary arenas’ for policy and decision making, with core strategic business carried out elsewhere (e.g. through bilateral engagement between the larger organisations). Therefore, CPPs function more as spaces for sharing information and planning and coordinating initiatives than as sites for sharing resources, budgets and decision-making.

We also found that deliberative quality<sup>13</sup> remains relatively low at board meetings. CPOs find that there is little challenge or disagreement during meetings and most find that the board is not a place where initiatives and decisions are open to collective scrutiny and improvement by partners. This is problematic if a CPP wants to ensure that priorities, policies and services are developed on the basis of critical engagement with evidence that considers the diversity of perspectives amongst partners.

The 2018 survey confirms the finding from 2016 that many CPOs remain sceptical about the extent to which some CP partners see the value of partnership work. One of the central issues is the unequal levels of influence in the CPP. Many respondents mentioned that councils are still regarded as the lead partner, and that the board is too ‘council-heavy’ and needs to become a more ‘level playing field’. Relatedly, others noted that “it still falls greatly on the Council to support the CPP”, and that other partners sharing and taking ownership of the priorities of the CPP, as well as sharing resources, could improve the work in the CPP. This indicates that there is some way to go to meet the objective embedded in the CEA that all partners, and not just the council, take more proactive roles in driving the work of the CPP.

## The role of evidence in CPP work

We found clear indication that evidence plays a prominent role in informing the work of CPPs. The evidence most often used by CPOs is obtained through public consultation and from CP partners. The use of evidence from public consultation is particularly significant

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<sup>13</sup> *Deliberative quality* refers to the quality of deliberation amongst participants. Assessing CPPs according to deliberative standards can help to ensure that priorities and services are being developed on the basis of: critical engagement with the best available evidence; inclusion of diverse perspectives that can shed light on the issue at hand; respectful dialogue that enables working through differences and disagreements, including productive exchanges of reasons, emotions and values; and conclusions/recommendations/decisions that reflect informed and considered judgement.



given the value that the CEA places on community input into policy and decision making. However, there are various types of evidence generated from public consultation and it is important to consider procedural issues when assessing the ‘usefulness’ and legitimacy of public consultation evidence. Its value greatly depends on the type and quality of processes put in place and whether they meet good standards of inclusion, participation and deliberation. Other sources of evidence commonly used are from national and local government, while sources from the third sector, academic institutions, and professional bodies are much less frequently used by CPOs. In terms of what evidence is particularly useful and valued, CPOs highlighted evidence from local areas, practical evidence of ‘what works’, and evidence that helps to evaluate outcomes.

It seems that the CEA has had an impact in focusing CPPs’ attention on inequalities. We find that CPOs in the 2018 sample use research to understand inequalities very often, particularly those working in strategic roles and at spatial scales where such data is available. The challenges faced by CPOs remain consistent across our surveys, with the most common being that they lack capacity to undertake their own research or commission research from others, and that they can’t find data at the appropriate spatial scale. There was also indication that the sharing of data amongst partners can be improved, for example creating a ‘data hub’ or ‘portal’ where CPP partners would be able to access one another’s evidence.

The 2018 survey also found a new area of interest in evidence use among CPOs, that of ‘perception-based data’. CPOs noted a desire for more evidence that captures the voices of a wide variety of community members. A tension was identified between the usefulness of high-level outcome indicators when speaking with community members, where perceptions may differ from what traditional indicators report. This suggests that both types of evidence are relevant to inform CP work. It also highlights the importance of involving community members in deliberative processes where they have access to evidence that may challenge perceptions or add nuance to local experiences. CPPs should provide more spaces for community interpretation of local needs and aspirations on the basis of a broad range of sources of evidence.

## Local achievements and challenges

The 2018 sample reflects more buy-in to the LOIP as a shared frame than to the previous SOA, and that the LOIP is providing more of a shared focus to tackle priorities through collaborative action at local and strategic levels. Respondents from the 2018 survey also have a more positive opinion of senior leadership than in 2016. This improvement is encouraging and may be the result of the CEA driving CPPs’ work to create the first round of LOIPs, which provided an avenue where senior leadership could exercise a new vision for community planning in their area of influence. Moreover, the 2018 survey also fielded a range of examples of activities and projects that would not happen without the CPP, and which illustrate the added value of partnership work. These include initiatives across policy

areas such as community justice, employment, participatory budgeting, housing, social care, poverty and inequalities.

We also find that CPPs are sometimes challenged by the need to reconcile local and national priorities. Indeed, this issue was brought up by CPOs when asked to detail some of the challenges of relationships between CP partners. Respondents noted existing contradictions between “different priorities set by the organisations themselves on the CPP and the Scottish Government”. A respondent illustrated this point by noting a “lack of a shared understanding of local needs, circumstances or aspirations”, where another highlighted that “national organisations whose agendas are set at the national level struggle to ‘do local’”. CPOs identified clear tensions in reconciling local and national priorities and indicated that this is challenging the relationships between CPP partners with different lines of accountability –some local and some national. This may impinge on CPPs’ autonomy to be responsive institutions of local governance able to act on the basis of local priorities.

## Understanding CPOs and their work

The survey indicates that the work of CPOs is highly influenced by the Christie Commission, the National Standards for Community Engagement and the Community Empowerment Act –with the National Performance Framework currently far less influential in their work. The survey has helped us to illustrate key characteristics of the current CPO workforce. CPOs remain an emerging and evolving community of practice without a clearly anchored institutional space and professional identity. They do not yet enjoy the recognition and understanding of more traditional council departments, and their role as brokers across organisational boundaries challenges some of the rigidities of traditional local government work.

Nevertheless, job satisfaction among CPOs is high despite the challenges illustrated throughout this report. This may be due to a relatively strong sense of commitment to making a difference, where CPOs see themselves as internal activists driving culture change on the ground to make local governance and public services more collaborative, participative and deliberative. We also found, however, gaps in the skills set needed to drive this agenda. Engagement skills are viewed by CPOs as the most important, but mediation and conflict resolution, two key types of engagement skills, were identified as areas where more skills are needed. These, along with research and resource management skills, are areas that should be targeted in capacity building and training efforts.

## Concluding: CPPs as institutions of local governance

CPPs in Scotland are examples of what the global policy studies literature calls collaborative or participatory governance. These are forms of governance that seek to transcend state-centric, command-and-control, hierarchical and technocratic forms of governance that have traditionally characterised public administration. Although the terminology is sometimes

used interchangeably, there are some nuanced differences in emphasis. Collaborative governance emphasises effective partnership work within and between organisations involved in public service, while participatory governance places emphasis on involving citizens and communities in policymaking and public service delivery.

In practice, while collaborative governance may seek inclusion by involving a diversity of stakeholder groups and intermediaries, participatory governance favours more direct forms of citizen participation. CPPs represent a blend of these two models. On the one hand, CPPs aim to enable better collaboration across policy areas, organisations and sectors. On the other, they aim to enable better community participation in policy and decision making. At their best, as stipulated by the CEA, CPPs should be effective platforms for both collaborative and participatory governance that enable better outcomes for people and their communities.

The point of doing governance in partnership is to maximise ‘collaborative advantage’ (Vangen and Huxham 2010), that is, to accomplish more than what the partners may accomplish acting separately. But the risk for all partnerships is that they can also develop ‘collaborative inertia’ unless they remain attentive and reflective about their practices and outcomes. The evidence gathered in our surveys indicates that, despite progress, there is some way to go to fulfil the potential of CPPs. Accordingly, we conclude with a set of recommendations.

## Recommendations

### For government:

1. There needs to be better public communication, from national and local government, to promote what CPPs do and how people can get involved.
2. The Scottish Government must clarify to what extent CPPs are autonomous spaces where communities and CP partners can focus on local priorities, even though they may vary from national priorities. The current Local Governance Review provides space to address this issue.
3. The Scottish Government should provide funding for the national Community Planning Network to provide more opportunities for peer learning and professional development amongst CPOs across the country.

### For CPPs:

1. Community participation and representation should be improved at all levels of CPPs, from local partnerships and forums to strategic groups and boards.
2. CPPs must improve transparency about how community engagement influences services, policies and decisions.

3. CP partners should pull together a shared community engagement fund to support lowering current barriers to participation<sup>14</sup>. Alongside traditional engagement, CPPs should develop capacity to organise more inclusive processes that involve citizens seldom heard and reflect a cross-section of the relevant community<sup>15</sup>.
4. CPPs should regularly monitor and address training and skills gaps in the CPOs workforce as well as CP partners tasked with facilitating CP processes. Areas that require particular attention are: research skills; engagement and facilitation skills, including mediation and conflict resolution; and resource management skills.
5. CPPs should develop a framework to improve the sharing and using of evidence between CP partners in order to make the most of existing capacity across organisations and sectors.
6. CPPs should provide spaces for community interpretation of local needs and aspirations on the basis of a broad range of sources of evidence. Community engagement processes must become more deliberative by building into any participatory process opportunities to engage with various sources of evidence about the geographic or policy area in question.

**For support and evaluation agencies:**

1. The evaluation of LOIPs and Locality Plans must assess to what extent community priorities are shaping the strategic priorities of a CPP. Evaluations must pay particular attention to inequalities in power and influence amongst and within communities.
2. Evaluations should examine the extent to which CPPs constitute effective ‘deliberative systems’ where different meetings and forums, from the local to the strategic, are coherently linked and feature high quality deliberation and effective action throughout.
3. Awareness of when and how to use Participation Requests must be improved. In particular, there is a role for organisations and networks that work with disenfranchised and disadvantaged groups to promote and support the use of Participation Requests.
4. The added value of CPPs needs to be better understood and communicated within CPPs, across local government and communities, and at national level – for example, by reporting more systematically the collaborative advantages gained through partnership work, as well as specific outcomes for communities of place, practice and interest.

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<sup>14</sup> See the WWS evidence review: ‘Hard to reach’ or ‘easy to ignore’? Promoting equality in community engagement: <http://whatworksscotland.ac.uk/publications/hard-to-reach-or-easy-to-ignore-promoting-equality-in-community-engagement-evidence-review/>

<sup>15</sup> There is a growing field of democratic innovations (e.g. digital crowdsourcing, mini-publics, participatory budgeting) from which to take inspiration. See for example <https://participedia.xyz>

# Appendices

## Appendix A: Methodology and demographic information of 2018 sample

### Methodology

Recruitment of participants began by identifying the community planning managers (or equivalent contact person) at each of the 32 local authorities (LA), firstly through partners at Scottish Government and then from the 2016 recruitment contacts. The 32 contacts were sent the contact information for the CPOs in their LA who participated in the 2016 survey with a request to update the contact list based on how the primary contact defines their current CP team. The team, as in 2016, was defined as 'staff who work for at least 50% of their time on CP, either at a local or strategic level': however, this requirement is not entirely stringent based on the varying organisational structures of Community Planning teams in some Local Authorities.

This recruitment garnered 230 contact details who were sent a link via email to complete the survey, which explained the purpose of the survey and that their participation was voluntary. This recruitment method was not identical to the recruitment method used for the 2016 survey, as this survey already had CP contacts from which to begin recruitment. The larger number of participants who were approached to complete the survey in 2018 is reflective of the changing shape of the CP profession itself in Scotland, so the samples used to analyse the field in both cases should not be considered entirely equivalent.

The survey was conducted online using Survey Expression software and was open for five weeks in May 2018 to July 2018. There were three rounds of reminder emails sent to all participants, a lower-touch method for reminding and asking participants to fill out the survey. In 2016, the PI spent time telephoning some of the primary CP contacts to request that they and their team participate. The project obtained ethical approval from the Research Ethics Committee at the School of Social and Political Sciences at the University of Edinburgh.

### Demographic Information

Age breakdown:

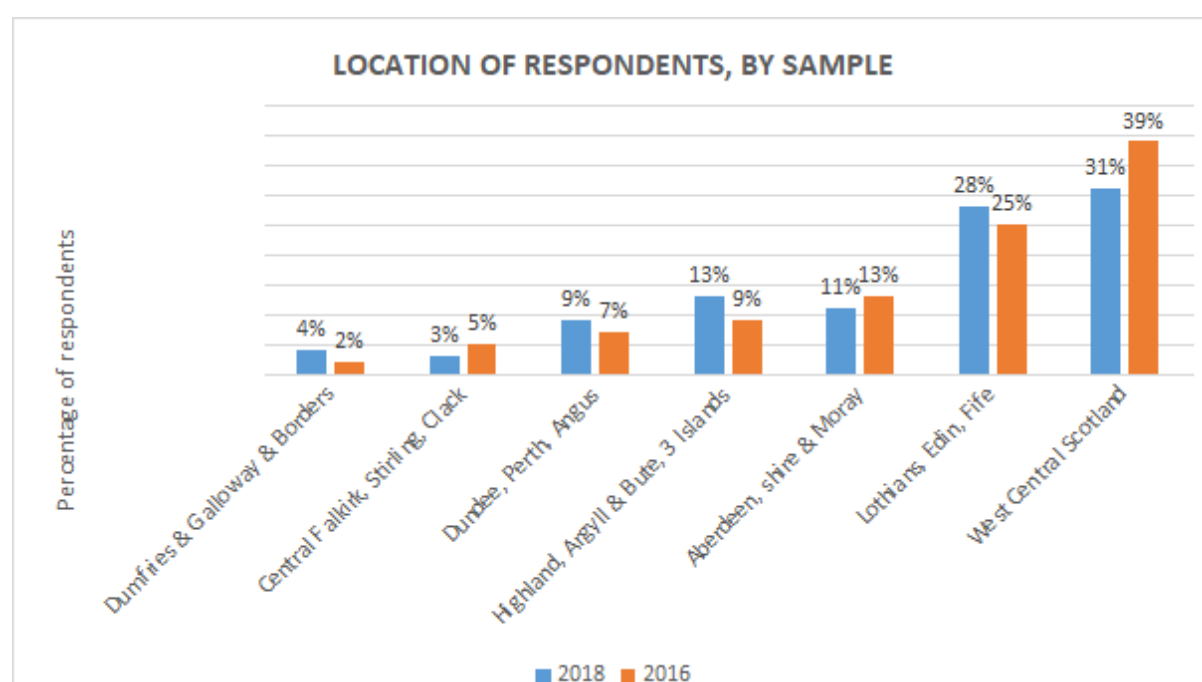
- 20% were 21-35 years old (20% in 2016 sample)
- 33% were 36-50 years old (46% in 2016 sample)
- 47% were 51-65 years old (36% in 2016 sample)

As with the 2016 survey, the 2018 survey reflects a highly educated CPO workforce. Of the 60 respondents who provided information on their highest qualification obtained, only 2 respondents had Highers as their highest qualification, while 26 had BA or equivalent

qualifications and 32 had postgraduate qualifications. The range of academic backgrounds is varied and includes management, public administration, community education, psychology, sociology, urban and regional planning, history, architecture and law (to name a few). For the smaller number of respondents (around 60) who also provided information on their previous job roles before their current CPO position, the range of experience is also varied. While some move from other previous community planning roles (CLD worker, area manager, policy officer) we also found experience in community safety, housing sector, corporate services or third sector roles. Both the range of education and job roles for this CPO sample is similar to what was found in the 2016 sample, and illustrate that pathways to the CPO role are diverse because community planning officials are a new type of policy worker.

Location of respondents (2018 and 2016):

These respondents also come from 29 local authorities out of the 32 in Scotland. To protect the anonymity of respondents, LAs were grouped into 7 localities, the breakdown of which is shown in Figure A1.



**Figure A1: Location of 2018 respondents vs. 2016 respondents**

### Further survey limitations:

There are two further caveats about the survey:

- Gathering a census of CPOs was very challenging. For example, it was often difficult to define who is in the CP team. We enlisted the help of CP managers in defining their core teams, and we specified inclusion criteria to ensure that, for most respondents, at least 50% of their time was spent on CP, thus constituting their core

job. But this excludes a range of practitioners who fall below that threshold and yet may be central to a CP team. In addition, the turnaround in the workforce meant that existing contact lists sometimes became quickly obsolete even during the period of the survey, particularly in areas with small CP teams.

- As with the first survey, we recognise its statistical limitations in terms of undertaking more complex analysis than what is possible in this report due to the small sample size. However, there is much basic analysis that can be done here to yield some findings both that are unique for the 2018 sample and can be discussed comparatively with the 2016 sample.

Please note that throughout the report decimal points have been rounded to the nearest percentage point and thus may not always add up to 100% exactly.

## Appendix B

It is also valuable to investigate the focus of CPP meetings at various levels. This shows the type of activities that are done by those who participate in board meetings, theme groups, local forums, etc. Roughly the same proportion of respondents at each level respond that activities happen 'a lot' or 'somewhat' in meetings which indicates that the frequency of these types of activities are relatively similar across CPP meeting types; see Table B1 below.

**Table B1: To what extent do people in CPP meetings do the following:**

	All (n = 74)	Board (n = 37)	Theme groups (n = 38)	Local forums (n = 26)	Area partnershi ps (n = 37)	Resource planning groups (n = 22)
<b>Share information</b>						
A lot/somewhat	90%	89%	92%	92%	92%	100%
Very little	9%	11%	8%	8%	8%	
<b>Plan initiatives with partners</b>						
A lot/somewhat	78%	81%	86%	73%	87%	87%
Very little	22%	19%	13%	27%	13%	14%
<b>Coordinate work</b>						
A lot/somewhat	68%	64%	73%	57%	76%	68%
Very little	32%	35%	26%	42%	24%	32%
<b>Make decisions</b>						
A lot/somewhat	76%	81%	82%	80%	78%	82%
Very little	23%	19%	18%	19%	22%	18%
<b>Review initiatives with partners</b>						

A lot/somewhat	75%	78%	84%	72%	69%	81%
Very little	25%	22%	16%	28%	31%	19%
<b>Share budgets</b>						
A lot/somewhat	23%	19%	18%	12%	27%	23%
Very little	76%	81%	82%	88%	73%	77%
<b>Share resources (other than budgets)</b>						
A lot/somewhat	52%	41%	48%	43%	59%	55%
Very little	47%	60%	52%	57%	40%	45%

## Appendix C

Responses to these two questions about the added value of the CPP are also broken down by the type of CPP meetings that respondents participate in. However, there is no significant variation in response patterns, so we can conclude that feelings about added value are generally consistent regardless of which CPP space the CPO is involved in.

**Table C1: ‘Added value’ according to the CPP spaces in which respondents are most involved**

Some of the CPP partners feel they could have achieved same on own						
	All	Board	Theme Group	Local Forum	Area Partnerships	Resource Planning
<b>Disagree</b>	<b>44%</b>	<b>49%</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>46%</b>
<b>Neither</b>	<b>23%</b>	<b>22%</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>14%</b>
<b>Agree</b>	<b>32%</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>44%</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>41%</b>
Decisions are usually being made elsewhere and not in the CPP meetings						
	All	Board	Theme Group	Local Forum	Area Partnerships	Resource Planning
<b>Disagree</b>	<b>23%</b>	<b>24%</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>37%</b>
<b>Neither</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>5%</b>
<b>Agree</b>	<b>62%</b>	<b>62%</b>	<b>63%</b>	<b>66%</b>	<b>66%</b>	<b>57%</b>

## Appendix D: Further examples of policies, services and projects impacted by the CPP

Many CPO respondents provided examples to answer the open response question, “Could you please give us one or two examples of policies, services, or projects that wouldn’t happen without the CPP?” Below are a further selection of open responses from CPOs, and reflect the variety of ways the CPP makes an impact.



- “Community Justice is very progressive [in our local authority] due to all the partnership working - problem solving courts are a great example and the pathway for those being released from prison. We are entering in to a lot more partnership work due to a renewed purpose within the wider CPP network, which includes a LEADER cooperation project across 4 areas which will help to deliver on 'Tackling Inequalities'”
- “Joint Property Asset Management group, which includes information sharing on future plans to allow for best collective use of assets. The Syrian Refugee Resettlement programme.”
- “Skills and employment related service provision wouldn't be as effective in [our local authority] without a partnership approach. The population of people who need to access employability services is relatively small compared to other authorities so the pooling and sharing of resources is essential to ensure services aren't working with the same individuals multiple times.”
- “The profile of the LOIP as the main document that services should be working to would not have happened without the work of the CPP. Our Criminal Justice Partnership work also has a high profile and has been assisted to pursue funding bids which would not have happened without work of CPP.”
- “Our local advice hub which is made up of a range of third sector partners adopting a one door access to a basket of support designed to alleviate poverty and mitigate the outcomes of welfare reform legislative changes.”
- “Participatory Budgeting events – over 49 projects funded and delivered around the social deprivation agenda. Food Bank collaboration of a number of partners to organise and deliver this provision.”
- “Tay Cities Deal - involves a massive range of partners over a prolonged period, and is about to come to fruition after at least two years concerted effort. Added value will be an influx of new investment and new / expanded projects across the region.”
- “New College Campus in Kilmarnock, this was a priority in the first Community Plan 2003-2015, however, around 2007 the plans were not coming to fruition. The Partnership then supported the College's through lobbying and direct support. College is now operational and a fantastic resources. The Partnership has supported a range of third sector initiatives through proactive commissioning of services via the Health and Social Care agenda, including, Feet First (a local chiropody initiative) and GP connectors.”
- “Strong work on tackling youth disorder comes from collaboration through community planning. A range of services from HSCP, Police, Fire, Council have been working together to tackle youth disorder/ low level antisocial behaviour in the area. Reductions have been seen which has a huge benefit for the community overall and also diverts youths from further antisocial behaviour.”
- “Mental Health Triage pilot between NHS and Police to support a 24 Hour mental health crisis response service in rural areas. This supported partnership working of

the police and NHS and met the needs of the person in crisis. It met needs of vulnerable persons, addressed inequalities in terms of access to services and addressed resource matters with police, NHS and Ambulance.”

- “The funding and resources allocated to Area Partnership priorities, including PB with young people, town centre charrettes, Heritage Connections Project.”
- “Homelessness Action Plan involving housing and health and social care. CPP provided a forum for discussion and development of a joint approach to this target group in the LOIP. Development of a co-ordinated Anti-poverty Strategy. CPP has provided a mechanism to start to pull together disparate strands around child, poverty, period poverty, welfare reform etc.”

## Appendix E: Impact of community engagement and work with elected members

Elected member work and opinion of CE activities influencing policy

**Table E1: Cross tabulation of elected member work and opinion on CE activities influencing policy (n = 70)**

How much do you think CE influences policy?	How often do you work with elected members?		Total
	Regularly	Not regularly	
A lot	31%	17%	20%
Somewhat	56%	63%	61%
Very little	13%	20%	19%
Total	100	100	100

Pearson’s Chi-square = 1.81, p = 0.40

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